



MORE FROM HOMEPAGE

- 

Texas housing agency board member voted for deals that paid his law firm
- Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones hit car that made improper left turn, police report says
- Texas educators say immigrant children aren't as much of a worry as state funding



THIS IS MEMBER-EXCLUSIVE CONTENT 

OPINION

Dallas, keep north Oak Cliff together in redistricting

We think there's power in neighborhoods, and redistricting should not break them up



Bishop Arts District in Dallas on Thursday, March 26, 2020. (Vernon Bryant / Staff Photographer)



By [Dallas Morning News Editorial](#)

2:00 AM on May 9, 2022



We're loading your content, stay tuned!

Dallas' Redistricting Commission is weighing two maps to define what our City Council representation will look like in the next decade. Much of the discussion hinges on the future of north Oak Cliff, and what happens there will reverberate across the city.

One map proposed by three redistricting commissioners, known as Map 17-A, would carve most of Kessler Stevens and all of Winnetka Heights out of north Oak Cliff's District 1. Those largely white neighborhoods form an influential political bloc in the area, and the idea is that casting them out and attaching them to a District 14 with downtown, Uptown and Oak Lawn would cement District 1 as a Hispanic opportunity district.

We disagree with this approach. It risks packing a district that is already overwhelmingly Hispanic with even more Hispanic residents at the expense of continuity of representation and neighborhood interests in other districts. For that reason, we're left to support the imperfect but superior map known as Map 41-A.



The current north Oak Cliff district has a Hispanic voting-age population of 70%. Under the proposed map that cuts out the white neighborhoods, that number would grow to 80%.

Most concerning is that in splitting Kessler Stevens and Winnetka Heights out of north Oak Cliff, the map also gerrymanders the Bishop Arts District and Davis Street commercial corridor to clump them with downtown and Uptown Dallas.

Many Hispanic residents in north Oak Cliff share concerns about the displacement of working-class families as property values soar and single-family homes get razed for apartments. But Bishop Arts is an economic engine that



pupuserías that are indispensable to north Oak Cliff's vibrancy and Latino identity.

This proposed map was amended by Redistricting Commissioner Domingo Garcia to preserve his neighborhood in the Kessler Stevens area in the north Oak Cliff district rather than placing it with the downtown district. That's a strange choice if the goal is to keep Kessler Stevens out.

The ripples of all this proposed surgery in north Oak Cliff would be felt heavily by residents in Uptown, old East Dallas and northeast Dallas who currently make up District 14. They would be portioned off among four other districts, scrambling neighborhood relationships and council representation.

It's inevitable that in redrawing a council map to adjust for demographic changes some neighborhoods will have to switch districts. But the severing of the current District 14 in this map is extreme.

The main complaint underpinning the redrawing of north Oak Cliff is that the district, despite being majority Hispanic, has not elected a Hispanic council member in 10 years. With a voting-age population that is 70% Hispanic and only 20% white, however, this is already a Hispanic opportunity district.

We think the broader question here is one of voter turnout, which is anemic across the city. It's wrong to cast the residents of Kessler Stevens and Winnetka Heights as villains for voting in council elections, as is their right. It's also worth noting that this area is represented by Hispanic and Black politicians at the county and state level, with votes from these neighborhoods.

We also have questions about the treatment of District 2 in the proposed maps. It already has a weird ribbon shape, extending from Dallas Love Field to the Cedars to East Dallas. Under the two finalist maps, the district would stretch to Far East Dallas, forming what one citizen called a "Joker smile." That may be too dramatic a span of the city for a single council member to represent well.



map will go to the City Council.

This is complicated work, and we are grateful for commissioners and everyday Dallasites who are engaged in the process. We hope that those making the decisions do not focus so much on one district that they lose sight of other parts of the city that also want fair and consistent representation. The prevailing philosophy should be keeping neighborhoods together.



[Dallas Morning News Editorial](#). Dallas Morning News editorials are written by the paper's Editorial Board and serve as the voice and view of the paper. The board considers a broad range of topics and is overseen by the Editorial Page Editor.

[✉ editorialboard@dallasnews.com](mailto:editorialboard@dallasnews.com) [@dmnopinion](#)



MORE FROM HOMEPAGE



Texas housing agency board member voted for deals that paid his law firm

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones hit car that made improper left turn, police report says

Texas educators say immigrant children aren't as much of a worry as state funding



NEWS > POLITICS

Here's what Dallas' council district map could look like for the next 10 years

The redistricting commission could decide on a new map of Dallas' 14 council districts on Monday.



The fountain at Carpenter Park in downtown Dallas on May 3, 2022. (Rebecca Slezak / Staff Photographer)



By [Everton Bailey Jr.](#)

6:00 AM on May 6, 2022 — Updated at 4:37 PM on May 6, 2022



City residents will have a chance to weigh in at Dallas City Hall on Saturday and Monday before the 15-member commission **narrows down the two finalist maps** to one. After the commission approves **the map**, it would then move on to Mayor Eric Johnson and the City Council, who would have 45 days to make any tweaks and approve the final version.

The new map of Dallas' 14 council districts would be in effect by the next City Council election in May 2023. Voters will have a say on all 14 positions and the mayor's seat next year.

The city realigns its Council district boundaries every 10 years after the release of the most recent U.S. Census data to reflect the changes in population. The goal is to make sure all districts have as close to an equal number of residents as possible to ensure fair representation.

Dallas' population grew by 106,563 residents in 10 years to 1.3 million, 2020 census numbers show, meaning each of the city's 14 districts should now have around 93,170 residents. Eight of the current districts have populations above that mark. For example, there are nearly 107,000 people in District 14, which includes Uptown, parts of downtown and Old East Dallas.





SPONSORED CONTENT

What every parent needs to know about concussions and how to treat them

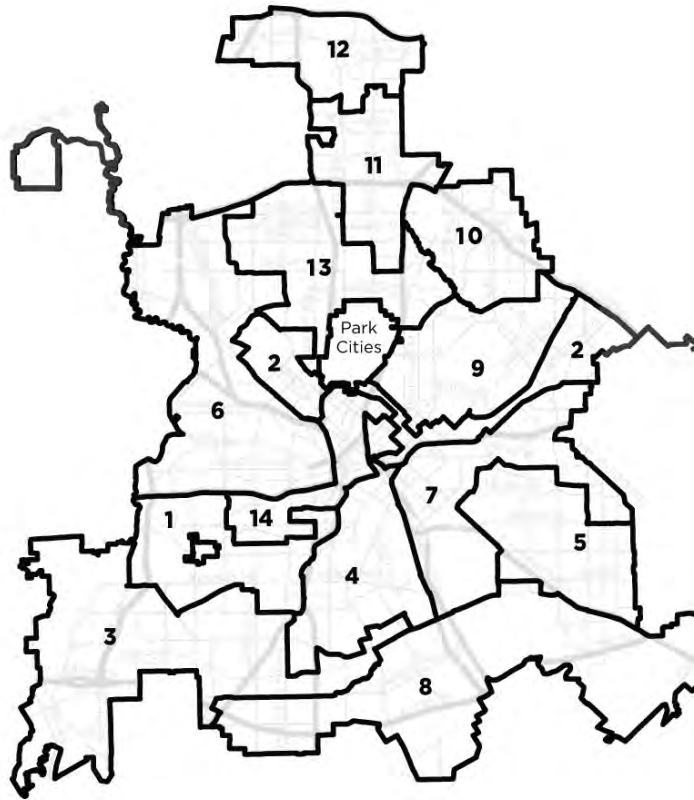
BY  Baylor Scott & White
HEALTH

The redistricting process has seen residents from around the city urging commission members not to split their neighborhoods to preserve existing community and cultural ties. Amendments were made to the last two maps earlier this week to address some of those concerns, but there will still be many residents who will find themselves with new City Council representatives after this process.

Here are some highlights of the boundary changes in the final two maps under consideration by the redistricting commission:



Bob Stimson and Roy Lopez



This map would see changes largely in central, southern and eastern Dallas, including shifting one incumbent council member out of the district they represent.



Walker Boulevard south of Interstate 30. The district would expand south to the Mountain View College area, the Kenwood area and most of Kiest Park.

The boundary shifts are projected to increase the makeup of residents from 73% Latino of the nearly 78,000 people who live there, to about 83% of close to a projected 89,000 of the district's total population.

The Bishop Arts District, much of the North Hampton Road area below I-30 and all of Oak Lawn would move to District 14. It also puts the home of incumbent council member Paul Ridley into District 9, which covers the White Rock Lake area and much of East Dallas.

District 9 would shift to cover much of the area east from the Park Cities, including University Crossing and Lower Greenville.

District 2 would keep the Dallas Love Field area and Deep Ellum, but also continue into Far East Dallas along Ferguson Road. The district would lose the Cedars to District 4, which would still cover much of the southern half of Oak Cliff, but also include parts of South Dallas west of the Julius Schepps Freeway.

District 6 in West Dallas would shift east to cover both sides of North Stemmons Freeway into part of the medical district as well as the west side of Webb Chapel Road in the northwest area of the city.





Districts 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 13 are kept roughly the same as today. District 1 keeps the Bishop Arts District area but still moves west to cover the area between Chalk Hill Road and Westmoreland Road.

District 4 continues to cover much of South Oak Cliff and, like the other map, shifts north to include the Cedars and parts of South Dallas near South Lamar Street and Al Lipscomb Way. Most of Kiest Park would shift to District 3, which still would cover much of southwest Dallas, but lose some of the Kenwood area.

District 14 would keep areas like Oak Lawn, Lower Greenville and University Crossing. And District 2 would extend to Far East Dallas and the Casa View area.

The commission will meet on Saturday at 3:30 p.m. to get feedback from the public on the two amended maps, then will meet again Monday at 3:30 p.m. to consider selecting the final map.

Anyone who wants to speak during the May 7 public hearing has to register online (www.bit.ly/2021RDCTH) by 10 a.m. the day of the meeting. Anyone who wants to give public comment during the May 9 redistricting commission meeting has to register via email at Redistricting@dallascityhall.com by 10 a.m. the day of the meeting.



Everton Bailey Jr. Everton covers Dallas city government. He joined The Dallas Morning News in November 2020 after previously working for The Oregonian and The Associated Press in Hartford, Conn.

[✉ everton.bailey@dallasnews.com](mailto:everton.bailey@dallasnews.com) [🐦 @EvertonBailey](https://twitter.com/EvertonBailey)



ADVERTISEMENT