

City of Topeka Redistricting Commission Minutes – September 1, 2022

CYRUS K. HOLLIDAY BUILDING, Topeka, Kansas, Thursday, September 1, 2022.

The Redistricting Commission of the City of Topeka met in special session at 5:00 P.M. with the following Commissioners present: Commissioner Jessica Porter (District 1), Marcus Clark (District 5), Vicki Arnett (District 6), Jeff Wagaman (District 7) and Bill Hill (District 8) - 5; and Commissioner Laura Pederzani (District 2) participated remotely - 1. Commissioner Michelle Hoferer (District 9) presided - 1. Absent: Commissioners Teresa Leslie-Canty (District 3) and John Nave (District 4). - 2.

Public comment could be submitted via email to cclerk@topeka.org or delivered in-person or mailed to the Office of the City Clerk located at 215 SE 7th Street, Room 166, Topeka, Kansas, 66603. All meetings are open to the public, televised and available for viewing online at <https://www.topeka.org/citycouncil/redistricting-commission/> or at <https://www.facebook.com/cityoftopeka/>.

AFTER THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER, the MINUTES of the August 18, 2022, meeting was presented.

Commissioner Porter moved to approve the minutes. The motion seconded by Commissioner Arnett carried unanimously on voice vote. (7-0-0)

Commissioner Nave entered the room.

PRESENTATION OF MAP PROPOSALS:

Commission Chair Hoferer requested Staff provide a short explanation of Plan D and Plan E Map proposals.

Tom Vogue, City of Topeka GIS Analyst, stated Plan D proposed by Commissioner Porter, resulted in seven changes; and Plan E submitted by Commissioner Arnett, resulted in 45

changes.

Commissioner Porter reported the intent of the Plan D Map proposal was to make the Hi-Crest community more cohesive; however, after receiving further input from Hi-Crest residents she will withdraw the Plan D Map proposal for consideration. She recognized the pivotal role Councilmember Ortiz fills in representing the Hi-Crest Neighborhood Improvement Associations and residents.

Commissioner Porter moved to withdraw the Plan D Map proposal for consideration. The motion seconded by Commissioner Clark carried unanimously on voice vote. (8-0-0)

Commissioner Arnett reported the intent of the Plan E Map proposal was to reposition the boundaries of Districts 8 and 9 along Interstate 70 with the hopes of establishing different precinct boundaries in the future as it relates community interest. She stated she believes the Community is not ready for the drastic changes being presented in the Plan C and Plan E Map proposals.

Commissioner Arnett moved to withdraw the Plan C and Plan E Map proposals for consideration. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nave.

Commissioner Nave expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Arnett for her efforts in presenting cohesive boundaries for the city as a whole. He referenced the importance of current and evolving community partnerships between residents, businesses and all levels of government and noted, those partnerships will have a vital role in the growth of the city's population over the next 10 years.

Commissioner Porter expressed her pride in the members of the Commission for considering all views and map proposals that have been presented. She spoke to the purpose of the Commission and the importance of supporting what the community wants for their

neighborhoods.

The motion to withdraw the Plan C Map proposal and the Plan E Map proposal carried unanimously on voice vote. (8-0-0)

DISCUSSION OF MAPS:

Commission Chair Hoferer acknowledged receipt of all email communications received by the Commission between August 19 and August 30, 2022. She announced discussion would continue on the Plan A and Plan B Map proposals.

Commissioner Pederzani reported she has received input from Downtown Topeka, Inc., and the NOTO Arts District and they are not in favor of the Plan B Map proposal because it shifts a section of downtown into District 2; therefore, she would propose to move forward with the recommendation of the Plan A Map proposal (Exhibit A) to the Governing Body.

Commission Chair Hoferer asked if there was anyone present who would like to speak to the matter. No one appeared in-person or virtually.

Commissioner Clark stated he has a great level of appreciation for the research and work that has been done, the amount of engagement by the community, and the many plans that have been proposed. He expressed the importance of making everyone aware and understand that the Topeka community is not afraid of change, and that the Commission heard and appreciates the feedback from the public, and that is what the recommendations will be based on. He stated in the future, he does not want proposals of change or difference to be seen as something they shy away from as a community.

Commission Wagaman expressed his appreciation of being asked to serve on the Commission, giving him the opportunity to work with his peers and the public. He stated one of his main goals while serving on the Commission was to be inclusive and transparent and this has

been done. He recognized the sense of compromise that was expressed by the community and the Commission.

Commissioner Pederzani moved to accept the Plan A Map proposal (Exhibit A). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wagaman.

Commissioner Arnett moved to amend the Plan A Map proposal by retaining Precinct 9, Ward 1, in District 6. She stated the intent of the amendment is to keep the Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA) intact. She also stated that she believes the Shawnee County Election Office will have to address precinct boundaries in the future.

Tom Vogue, City of Topeka GIS Analyst, reported if Precinct 9, Ward 1, remains in District 6, the population would be under the required target range and District 3, would be over the required target range. He noted the target population variant is 352.

Commissioner Nave reported the size of precincts made it difficult 10 years ago to adjust district boundaries. He stated he believes District 6 is the most balanced as it relates to boundaries and sees no other choice based on population numbers. He spoke in support of the Plan A Map proposal.

Discussion ensued on the lack of authority the Commission and City Council have to change precinct boundaries and the need for changing the boundaries in the future in order to keep neighborhoods cohesive.

Commissioner Arnett withdrew her amendment to the Plan A Map proposal.

The motion to accept the Plan A Map proposal (Exhibit A) carried unanimously on roll call vote. (8-0-0)

Commission Chair Hoferer asked the Commission if there were any recommendations and/or comments they would like included in the final report. She also asked how they envision

presenting the report to the Governing Body.

Commissioner Nave stated that he hopes the attempts made by the Commission and citizens sends a message that Topeka is a great city and has the possibility to be one of the top cities in the nation. He commented on continued efforts to evolve as a community through positive partnerships of business leaders, elected officials and community leaders and if they continue on this path they should see a big difference in population numbers over the next 10 years. He spoke to the importance of being inclusive with all NIAs and NAs so they can take pride in their city.

Commissioner Porter requested all email communications received by the Commission between August 19 and September 1, 2022 be forwarded to the Governing Body.

Commission Chair Hoferer directed City Staff to forward all emails to the Governing Body.

Commissioner Nave spoke in support of the Commission as a whole being present at the Governing Body meeting when the report is presented.

Commissioner Wagaman spoke in support of a short concise report summarizing that the Plan A Map proposal was passed unanimously in just two meetings.

Commission Chair Hoferer recommended comments be included in the report relating to the difficulty in making decisions due to the lack of authority to make changes to precinct boundaries, and if there was a way the Governing Body could push for change in the future they should do so.

Mary Feighny, Deputy City Attorney, reported the final recommendations would be presented to the Governing body for discussion and must considered for action by December 31, 2022. She stated public comment would be allowed at the Governing Body meetings.

Commission members thanked City Staff for their assistance with the process and thanked the Governing Body for allowing them to serve on the Commission.

Commissioner Nave moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Commissioner Wagaman carried unanimously by voice vote. (8-0-0)

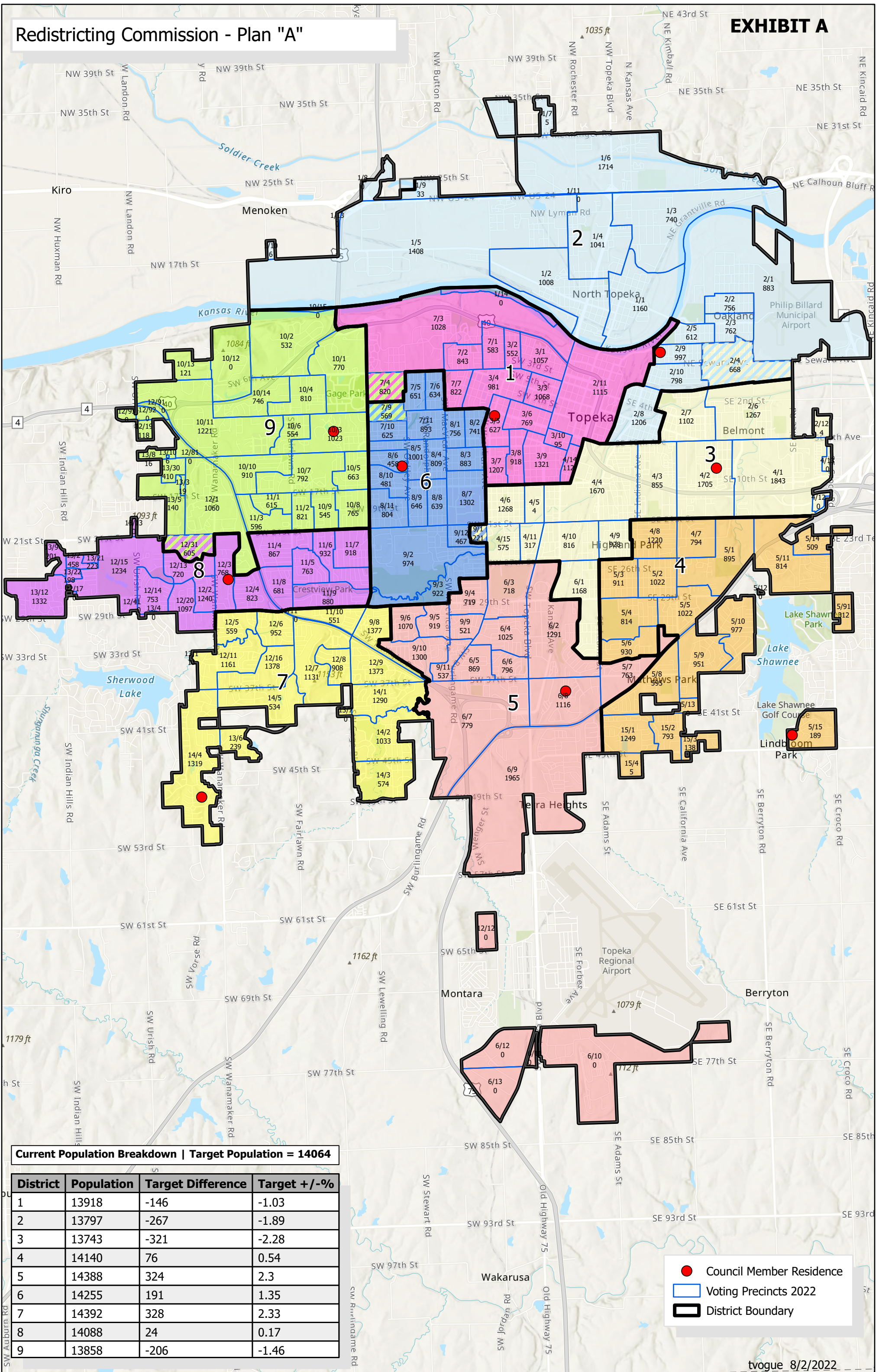
NO FURTHER BUSINESS appearing the meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

(SEAL)

Brenda Younger
City Clerk

Redistricting Commission - Plan "A"

EXHIBIT A



Current Population Breakdown | Target Population = 14064

District	Population	Target Difference	Target +/- %
1	13918	-146	-1.03
2	13797	-267	-1.89
3	13743	-321	-2.28
4	14140	76	0.54
5	14388	324	2.3
6	14255	191	1.35
7	14392	328	2.33
8	14088	24	0.17
9	13858	-206	-1.46

- Council Member Residence
- Voting Precincts 2022
- District Boundary