



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission
Public Hearings

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Electoral Boundaries Commission

Judge Ernest J.M. Walter, Chairman

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Peter Dobbie, QC
Brian Evans, QC
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Progressive Conservative Constituency Association
Allan LePoudre and Ada Rawlins, Airdrie-Chestermere
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6:58 p.m.

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[Judge Walter in the chair]

The Chair: Good evening. Thank you for taking time to come out and share your views with us today. I know I speak for all of us when I say that we're looking forward to hearing from you.

My name is Ernie Walter, and I'm the chairman of the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission. I'd like to introduce to you the other members of the commission here with me today: on my far right, Dr. Keith Archer of Banff; next to him, Peter Dobbie of Vegreville; on my immediate left, Allyson Jeffs of Edmonton; and next to Allyson, Brian Evans of Calgary.

Our task is that we have been directed by legislation to make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on the areas, boundaries, and names for 87 electoral divisions based on the latest census and population information. In other words, our job is to determine where and how to divide Alberta into 87 areas so that each Albertan receives effective representation by a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Over the next few months we will seek community input through a province-wide consultation before developing our recommendations. Through public hearings such as the one here today we want to hear what you have to say about the representation you are receiving in your community.

In carrying out this work, we have to follow the provisions of the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act. It says that we are to make proposals to the Legislative Assembly regarding the areas, boundaries, and names of 87 electoral divisions. You will recognize that that means we are mandated to propose four additional electoral divisions in Alberta, which will come into effect at the next provincial general election. We are also reviewing the law, what the courts have said about electoral boundaries in the province of Alberta, the work of previous commissions and committees which have studied boundaries in Alberta, and the population information which is available to us.

A brief summary of the electoral boundaries law. As I've said, we are to make proposals to the Legislative Assembly for 87 electoral divisions. We have a limited time to accomplish this task. We are required, after consideration of representations made at the public hearings, to submit an interim report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in February of 2010 that sets out the areas, boundaries, and names of the 87 proposed electoral divisions and reasons for those proposed boundaries. Following publication of the interim report, a second round of public hearings will be held to receive input on the proposed 87 boundaries. After consideration of that input the commission must submit a final report to the Speaker of the Assembly by July of 2010. Then it is up to the Legislative Assembly by resolution to approve or to approve with alterations the proposals of the commission and to introduce a bill to establish new electoral divisions for Alberta in accordance with the resolution. The law would then come into force when proclaimed, before the holding of the next general election.

One way to ensure effective representation is by developing divisions with similar populations, especially where the population density is similar. The law directs us to use the populations set out in the most recent census of Alberta as provided by Statistics Canada, the 2006 census, but if the commission believes there is population information that is more recent than the federal census compiled by Statistics Canada, then the commission may use this data in conjunction with the census information, and for Calgary and Edmonton and a number of other communities we do have updated 2009 census information which has been accepted from these municipalities by Municipal Affairs. I also note that we are required

to add the population of Indian reserves that were not included in the census, as provided by the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

In dividing Alberta into 87 proposed electoral divisions, the commission will take into consideration any factors it considers appropriate, but it must and shall take into consideration the following:

- (a) the requirement for effective representation as guaranteed by the . . . Charter of Rights and Freedoms,
- (b) sparsity and density of population,
- (c) common community interests and community organizations, including those of Indian reserves and Metis settlements,
- (d) wherever possible, the existing community boundaries within the cities of Edmonton and Calgary,
- (e) . . . the existing municipal boundaries,
- (f) the number of municipalities and other local authorities,
- (g) geographical features, including existing road systems, and
- (h) the desirability of understandable and clear boundaries.

The population rule in the act states that a proposed electoral division must not be more than 25 per cent above or below the average population for all 87 electoral divisions. There is one exception to this, and that is that up to four proposed electoral divisions may have a population that is as much as 50 per cent below the average population of the electoral divisions in Alberta if three of the following five criteria are met:

- (a) the area . . . exceeds 20 000 square kilometres or the total surveyed area of the proposed electoral division exceeds 15 000 square kilometres;
- (b) the distance from the Legislature Building in Edmonton to the nearest boundary of the proposed electoral division by the most direct highway route is more than 150 kilometres;
- (c) there is no town in the proposed electoral division that has a population exceeding 8000 people;
- (d) the area of the proposed electoral division contains [a First Nation] reserve or a Metis settlement;
- (e) the proposed electoral division has a portion of its boundary coterminous with a boundary of the Province of Alberta.

Then the act also goes on to say that for these purposes the municipality of Crowsnest Pass is not a town.

7:05

That's a very general overview of the legislation, but the Alberta Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada have also provided guidance. In rulings they have agreed that under the Charter the rights of Albertans include the right to vote; the right to have the political strength or value or force of the vote an elector casts not unduly diluted; the right to effective representation; the right to have the parity of the votes of others diluted, but not unduly, in order to gain effective representation or as a matter of practical necessity. These rulings as well as the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act must guide our decisions and, ultimately, the proposals that we will make to the Legislative Assembly.

Now that I've explained the law we're guided by, we want to receive what is very important, and that is the public input. We believe that what we hear from you, the people who will be affected by these boundary changes, is critical to recommending a new electoral map that will ensure fair and effective representation for all Albertans.

Again, on behalf of the commission let me welcome you here today. Those of you who are not speaking can make your views known in writing by mail, fax, or e-mail, and we encourage you to do that.

With that background, I'll now call on our staff to call the first speaker. Each speaker will have 10 minutes to present and then five minutes for questions and answers with the commission. These

public meetings are being recorded by *Alberta Hansard*, and the audio recordings will be posted on the commission website. Transcripts of these proceedings will also be available. If you have registered as a presenter or choose to participate in this evening's meeting, we ask that you identify yourself for the record prior to starting your presentation.

Now it's my pleasure to call upon the first presenters.

Ms Friesacher: The first presenters are Mr. Allan LePoudre and Ms Ada Rawlins.

Allan LePoudre and Ada Rawlins, Airdrie-Chestermere Progressive Conservative Constituency Association

Mr. LePoudre: Good evening and welcome. My name is Allan LePoudre. I am currently the treasurer and the past president of the Airdrie-Chestermere PC association.

Ms Rawlins: I'm Ada Rawlins, and actually I'm the past president. You're the past past president of the Airdrie-Chestermere PC association, a past president of the riding.

Mr. LePoudre: The submission we're giving tonight is based on the 2006 census, knowing full well that the population of especially Airdrie and Chestermere has changed in the last few years. What we're submitting is based on 2006. Now, there should be a map there and also a copy of the presentation. What we know now is that we exceed what we should have as a population by over 10,000 people, and what we are proposing is to realign the boundaries of our riding so that we come underneath that, that we come out at 43,300. That is the population that we would have by realigning the boundaries of the riding.

Now, the reason that we're choosing to do this, align the boundaries as such, is so that Airdrie and Chestermere could remain within the same riding. The reason we say that is because Airdrie and Chestermere are both similar communities in that we're both close to Calgary. If you look at the first page, I'll just let you read what is common between Airdrie and Chestermere. I can let you do that for a few minutes.

The Chair: Or you could feel free to just discuss it with us, and we'll have some questions, I'm sure, afterwards.

Mr. LePoudre: All right. I'll just read these. Airdrie and Chestermere are two unique, mid-sized urban municipalities with similar needs, issues, and characteristics. For example, both are independent satellite communities to Calgary, meaning that they place the highest value on local autonomy but understand that because a substantial amount of their population commutes to the city of Calgary to work and recreate, they must co-operate with Calgary on a regional basis on regional issues.

Both are members of the Calgary Regional Partnership. Both are pursuing increased mass transit infrastructure to and from Calgary. Both have similar infrastructures in that they both have provincial highways that intersect them and will be directly connected to each other by the almost completed Calgary north ring road. Both rely on the city of Calgary to provide their municipalities with sewer and water. Stormwater from both municipalities is routed through the same Western irrigation district canal system. Both areas are serviced by the Rocky View school division. Both communities strongly oppose any boundary realignment that would see them be included in a Calgary riding, and both communities, particularly Chestermere, feel they do not fit well within a primarily rural, agricultural constituency, i.e. Strathmore-Brooks.

If you look at the map, what we've done in the area that's shaded in yellow is we've taken that part and put that into the Olds-Didsbury riding. Where it actually used to be was within that riding. The reason we are doing that is because that area has more in common with Olds and Didsbury, being more an agricultural area. If you look at the area that's shaded in green, which includes Langdon, we would include that with Strathmore and Brooks. Once again, it's an agricultural area. Strathmore-Brooks being an agricultural riding, we feel that would be a fit. The area in blue is the area that was annexed by the city recently. The only other change would be that as the boundary used to come just on the outside of Airdrie, we would go west a little bit up to Symons Valley Road. There are 700 people that are in that area.

If you do it that way, we eliminate I think it's 10,000. I forget the number here now. We go from 53,700, I think it was, down to 43,300. That kind of just is at the borderline of what is allowable right now, from what we understand, as to how many people we can have in the riding. Because of Airdrie and Chestermere having so much in common as far as communities go, we feel this would be a suitable riding for representatives to represent given the nature of the two communities. Being now close to the city, it's primarily an urban as opposed to an agricultural area.

The Chair: Is there anything further you'd like to add, or are you open to questions?

Ms Rawlins: I would just like to add that from Chestermere's viewpoint, which is where I live, there is an awful lot of anger whenever the comment comes up that we will be included in the Calgary-East riding. They definitely do not want that. They want to stay part of the Airdrie riding.

7:15

The Chair: You don't want to be included in a Calgary riding.

Ms Rawlins: No, we certainly do not. Our boundaries now meet out there, but there is a very, very strong feeling that that is an absolute: do not allow Chestermere to be part of a Calgary riding.

The Chair: All right.
Brian.

Mr. Evans: Thanks, Mr. Chairman, and thanks, both of you, for your presentation. Just looking at a little more recent figures although we've got a provincial breakdown but not a per constituency breakdown, probably Strathmore-Brooks is over the quotient already, and adding another 5,100 people would likely be an issue. Have you had any discussions with any of the regions, areas that you would exclude from this new riding, and do you have any comments from anyone representing those areas as to their feelings about being moved into the other constituencies that you're suggesting?

Mr. LePoudre: Yes, we have. One of our members spoke to us and sent us an e-mail. He kind of agrees that this area that we're talking about is more of an agricultural area than it is an urban area. You know, he would probably go along with what we're saying, and that's based on the conversation we've had so far. We don't feel, based on what we know now, that we would have any difficulty with these two areas.

Ms Rawlins: I don't think we'd have any problems whatsoever on it.

Mr. Evans: Including Langdon? Because Langdon is a bedroom community, right?

Mr. LePoudre: Possibly Langdon.

Mr. Evans: Okay. All right. Just one more question. The north boundary under what you've marked as 8, that cut-out there: is that because of a plant or something of that nature?

Mr. LePoudre: No. The city annexed that.

Mr. Evans: Up north?

Mr. LePoudre: Just north of the city, you mean?

Mr. Evans: Yeah.

Mr. LePoudre: I believe so. I think we're correct in saying that.

Mr. Evans: That's the rationale, anyway, that that cut-out there, that rectangle, is annexation.

Mr. LePoudre: Should I bring this up to you?

Mr. Evans: No. Believe me, I'll take your word for it. Okay. Great. Thanks very much.

Dr. Archer: Thanks, Mr. LePoudre and Ms Rawlins. This is really helpful. You know, this is clearly one of the ridings that we need to look at pretty closely because you're over by so much even with the 2006 data, and there's lots of construction happening there. I suspect that with the 2009 data it's going to be even more over the population quotient.

Again, just looking at the proposed changes to the riding, the part that you're suggesting is going to Olds-Didsbury is still a relatively small population that you're proposing to move there, about 3,700 people. We don't have all of the maps in front of us here, but is it the case that you're suggesting that that part go to Olds-Didsbury and the other part below it go to Strathmore because that's the current boundary between 44 and 46? Is that the area that's going to separate them otherwise as well?

Mr. LePoudre: This is our current riding right now.

Dr. Archer: With the Olds-Didsbury riding at present would it be correct to say that if you took this yellow and green area and drew this line across, that would be the line that's separating Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills from Strathmore-Brooks?

Mr. LePoudre: It could be. I'm not sure.

Dr. Archer: I'm just kind of wondering if it makes sense to find a way of transferring even more residents into Olds-Didsbury because they're under even with the data from 2006 whereas, as Brian Evans was saying, Strathmore-Brooks is already over. One of the problems we're going to run up against there is adding more constituents to an area that already is over the average.

Mr. LePoudre: If you went below that line to take all the green area into Olds-Didsbury, it's a long, long riding distance-wise.

Dr. Archer: Right. Yeah. That's going to be one of the challenges that we face, yet to try to equalize the population, we may be forced to do that kind of configuration.

The other question I was going to ask is about the area that you've identified as the city of Calgary in the southwest part of the current constituency. Has that been annexed by the city? Is that why that's in blue now?

Mr. LePoudre: Yes.

Dr. Archer: Right. Okay. Well, thanks. This is very useful advice for us.

The Chair: Peter.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you. First of all, the type of information and the specifics are very helpful, so I wanted to thank you both for providing the details. I guess maybe to reassure you a little bit, we've looked further south, and certainly the Brooks component of that riding may need addressing in any event. It may be that your suggestion is consistent with some of our other thinking anyway, that we would need to move some population down into that riding if we move Brooks to somewhere else.

My question relates to any discussions you've had. On this map I don't have the county overlays. It appears that you're taking in some of the municipal district or county of Rocky View. Is that correct?

Mr. LePoudre: This should be all Rocky View. It is all Rocky View.

Mr. Dobbie: Sorry. To the west of Airdrie?

Mr. LePoudre: Yeah.

Mr. Dobbie: But there's more of Rocky View than is contained here. So you would be dividing up Rocky View?

Ms Rawlins: It's already divided.

Mr. Dobbie: Okay. Have you had discussions with the reeve or the municipal administration for the county about that issue, whether they would be content to still be divided, or are they looking to be one county in one constituency?

Mr. LePoudre: No, we haven't.

Mr. Dobbie: You haven't had those discussions.

Ms Rawlins: I think they are so used to being divided that it doesn't even cross their mind. They go all the way to the west down to Bragg Creek and down to the Bow River.

Mr. Dobbie: So that's not their issue.

Ms Rawlins: No.

Mr. Dobbie: One other matter that, I guess, concerns me is that the Calgary and outer Calgary regions are likely to continue to grow, and if your proposal has you at something already above what we think the quotient will be, 40,583, there's no room for that constituency to grow except higher above the average. So in talking with people within your constituency, do they recognize that it's likely that if you're starting at 42,000 or 43,000 or 45,000, the constituency will get larger in terms of population?

Mr. LePoudre: We recognize that.

Mr. Dobbie: And the trade-off between grouping the two communities together is a higher priority than the total number of people.

Mr. LePoudre: At this point.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you.

The Chair: Allyson.

Ms Jeffs: Thank you very much. I'll add my compliments to the math and the detailed presentation. It's very helpful. Really just following on what the other members of the commission have said in terms of the challenge we have with the population averages, am I understanding correctly that the numbers on the map and the population numbers are 2006 data?

Mr. LePoudre: Right. The rural data is 2008, not 2006, but the rural population probably wouldn't have changed too much as opposed to Airdrie and Chestermere. Langdon has changed.

Ms Jeffs: Okay. So we may have to crunch those numbers a little bit.

Peter Dobbie has already suggested that it sounds like your trade-off would be to keep the communities together even if we had to stretch that upper boundary and go above the average riding. Is there any flexibility in these boundaries that would sort of shrink the population if we needed to, if we had to tinker with your proposal a bit? It's pretty tight. That's about as much as you can do.

Mr. LePoudre: Really, that small area on the west side with 700 people or just a little bit above Airdrie, right up here: there's not much room there to work with.

7:25

Ms Jeffs: All right. That's really the only question I had. I just wanted to see what we could do. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you both very much. It's been very helpful. Anything further you'd like to get to us in a written submission, we'd be very appreciative of.

Mr. LePoudre: Okay.

Ms Rawlins: I might mention that we are holding a general meeting on Saturday, and this is one of the issues on the agenda, so we may have comments to report to you after that meeting.

The Chair: All right. We'd like to get them if we could before the 13th of October.

Ms Rawlins: We'll do our best.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Dobbie: It may not hurt if you did make a note of some of the data, that 40,583 appears to be our current working number for the average.

Ms Rawlins: What is it?

Mr. Dobbie: It's 40,583.

Ms Rawlins: And that is?

Mr. Dobbie: The total population of Alberta divided by 87.

Ms Rawlins: Okay. But that can be plus or minus . . .

Mr. Dobbie: Twenty-five per cent is the legislated amount.

Mr. LePoudre: Twenty-five per cent over and above this number here, you mean?

Mr. Dobbie: Right. Plus or minus 25 per cent from that number.

Mr. LePoudre: We thought it was 37,000.

Mr. Dobbie: Right. That's why I was making sure you knew the updated number.

Mr. Evans: You were basing it on the 2006 census. With the information we have now, we've got higher population, obviously, in the three years, so it averages out to 40,583.

Mr. Dobbie: Since you're writing, the total population we have at this stage is 3,520,208, using 2009 data where available.

Ms Rawlins: Did all the municipalities in the province have a census in 2009?

The Chair: No.

Ms Rawlins: A lot of them wouldn't have, I wouldn't imagine.

Mr. Dobbie: But the major ones. The vast majority of the population is covered.

The Chair: Edmonton, Calgary, and most of the larger urban centres.

Ms Jeffs: Most of the growth areas have had a recent census, so we're using that data in conjunction with the 2006 census to try and get the most up-to-date data. Our understanding with the more recent census data is that Airdrie-Chestermere is currently about 62.2 per cent above that average as it currently exists. So we'll be looking at the numbers with the proposal. Obviously, something has to happen there.

The Chair: Again, thank you both very much, and anything further we'd love to hear from you.

Mr. LePoudre: Thank you for hearing from us.

Ms Rawlins: Thank you.

The Chair: We have no one scheduled as a presenter until – is it 8 o'clock?

Ms Friesacher: Our next presenter is scheduled for 8:15.

The Chair: Is there anybody here who would like to make a presentation or say something? The reason we're asking is that we had other presenters that were to be here this evening, but we worked them in late this afternoon. They were here, so we worked them in and went a little longer then. So is anybody interested?

Otherwise, we will adjourn until our other presenter gets here. Yes, sir.

Mr. Young: Just a quick question, Mr. Chairman, because I was here late.

The Chair: Could you just come forward and identify yourself for the record?

Bob Young
Private Citizen

Mr. Young: My name is Bob Young, and I'm going to be working on presentations in the second phase on behalf of a couple of constituency associations. I just wanted to clarify that there's been a revised number on the base, that it's 40,583.

The Chair: That's the current one we have here. What happens is that by law we're required to utilize the 2006 Canada census. We are under the act now allowed to also look at the more recent municipal census that's available. These numbers have just been coming in daily for 2009, and that's how we arrived at that number of 40,583. We realize that, for instance, the population of Airdrie-Chestermere is going to be significantly higher when the 2009 data is there.

Mr. Young: Yes. Okay. I'll be acting on behalf of two Calgary ridings. But that number will be consistent throughout the province?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Young: All right. Thank you very much.

The Chair: I thank you.

If there is no further presentation, we'll adjourn, then, till our next presenter is here.

[The hearing adjourned from 7:31 p.m. to 7:49 p.m.]

The Chair: All right. We're ready to go on with the hearing at this point. I see we have two presenters. Could you for the record please identify yourselves?

Mr. Breeze: Sure. My name is Paul Breeze. I'm past president of the Calgary-Shaw PC association, and I'm also chairman of our ad hoc committee on the boundary review. I'm joined here by Don Ady, another board member of Calgary-Shaw Progressive Conservative association.

The Chair: All right. Well, thank you very much, both of you, for being here. We'd love to hear what you have to say.

Paul Breeze and Don Ady, Calgary-Shaw
Progressive Conservative Constituency Association

Mr. Breeze: I have made a formal written presentation, but for the most part I'd like to refer to pages 5 and 6 of our presentation because I understand I've got 10 minutes, and I don't think you want me to be reading the letter from cover to cover. Attachment 1, which is on page 5 of our written presentation, represents the present boundaries of Calgary-Shaw. On the right-hand side, or the east side, we have Calgary-Hays, and on the left-hand side, or the west side, we have Calgary-Lougheed.

We looked at the boundary condition in two ways. First of all, if you like, we internalized and looked at what would be best for

Calgary-Shaw, and then we looked at some potential pressures that could be around Calgary-Shaw. The first one I'm going to present is what we thought was the best situation for Calgary-Shaw.

One thing I should add is that this is the boundary that was developed after the 2002-2003 boundary review. If one looks at the southern boundary, which was then 194th Avenue, the city limit has now moved from 194th Avenue to 226th Avenue, or further south, which is not on this map, but I'll get to it in a moment.

Calgary-Shaw has approximately 44,000 residents. We're about 18 per cent above the average, but we're below the maximum of 25 per cent. Calgary-Lougheed to the west of us is around 25 per cent over, and Calgary-Hays to the east of us is about 25 per cent over, so distributing our population east or west didn't seem feasible. When you go to the north – hopefully you can see it on this map – we've got Fish Creek, which is an unwieldy place to get to, from the north side of Fish Creek to the south side of Fish Creek.

Our first option which we'd like to present is our preferred option. Our primary recommendation to the commission is for the Calgary-Shaw boundaries to remain as they are with the exception that the southern boundary be moved from 194th Avenue to 226th Avenue, which is the new southern limit of the city of Calgary. That would bring in, actually, two new communities, Walden and Legacy. If you use the 2006 census, the population of Walden and Legacy was zero, so in theory, looking at the 2006 numbers, we're not increasing the population of Calgary-Shaw.

We believe that our boundaries, both natural and man made, are strong. We have Fish Creek to the north. We have the Bow River to the east, potentially a city limit to the south, and an arterial road to the west. As I said, we're in the 25 per cent limit. We cannot distribute population to Hays or Lougheed. In theory we could distribute to Calgary-Fish Creek, but as I said, access is unwieldy. We believe that the commission should respect that all residents of Shaw need continuity of quality representation in the Legislature. We believe that the Hon. Cindy Ady has done a very good job, and one can judge that by the results of the past election.

Now, I said earlier that we'd looked at it in two ways. The second way we also looked at Calgary-Shaw is that when one looks at Calgary as a whole, clearly we're overpopulated for the number of divisions, and clearly there's going to be some shuffling. It looks as though the northwest is pretty crowded, and we're fairly crowded around us, too. So the second option, because of potential squeezing into Calgary-Shaw, was quite a dramatic difference. We don't think it's completely desirable, but we're presenting it as an option.

If you go to page 6 or attachment 2, we have suggested that Calgary-Shaw retain – well, Walden and Legacy are not in Calgary-Shaw just at the moment, but assuming that the boundary goes down to 226th Avenue, as shown on the second sheet, we would retain Midnapore, Sundance, Chaparral, Walden, and Legacy. We have offered to take Cranston on the east side. Although it jumps across the Bow River, there's still a fairly good boundary, which is Deerfoot Trail, or highway 2, on the east side. This would mean that we would have to give up the communities of Shawnessy, Somerset, and Silverado, as shown on the west side. This brings the population of Calgary-Shaw to approximately, if my numbers are correct, 31,900, which would mean that we'd be 16 per cent under the average. But having said that, clearly there is some room for growth in those new areas, Walden and Legacy, and I would imagine that within five years Calgary-Shaw would be back to somewhere around the provincial average.

So two recommendations: leave us alone; extend the southern boundary to the city limit. We're within the guidelines for the legislation, but if you get caught in a squeeze and need to shuffle some things around, we've presented an option for a much smaller Calgary-Shaw.

That concludes our presentation, but I'd be pleased to try and answer any questions.

7:55

The Chair: Brian.

Mr. Evans: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thanks, gentlemen. The overview is quite helpful to us. Option 1, the first choice, would certainly put your numbers well over the quotient. Notwithstanding that that would still be your first option, is that because of the unique qualities that Cindy Ady has? Or do you have other reasons for feeling that the MLA for that area, whether it's Cindy or whoever, would be able to deal with that population higher than the quotient?

Mr. Breeze: We tried to look at it from the population's perspective. Going back to 2002, Calgary-Shaw was 85,000 people, and it was our recommendation that clearly Calgary-Shaw had to be made smaller. But having done that, a lot of people lost Cindy as their representative and were not over the moon about it; I'll put it that way. It's very difficult for us to sit here this evening and say: well, you know, we'll solve the problem by just getting rid of a few communities. I don't think those communities, if we asked them this evening, would be supportive of that. Cindy has provided a lot of assistance in the community. As I said, she is well respected, and I certainly didn't feel comfortable and I don't think any of us on the board felt comfortable chopping up Calgary-Shaw and just letting the chips fall where they fall. Having said that, we did make an alternative recommendation in case you felt it necessary.

Mr. Evans: Right.

Mr. Ady: I'd like to just take a moment and address that as well. Over and above Cindy, I think these communities have really grown together. Geographically they've been isolated in a sense from the rest of the city just because of the geography of Fish Creek park. There are really only one or two ways across that, so these communities – just to give you little history, there was a junior high school that was being built. The Calgary school board came in and said, "Well, we're only going to allow Sundance to go, and Midnapore's out," and the Sundance community said: "That's not acceptable to us. We are MidSun." They see themselves as a community. I think that if you talk to the community leaders, the people that live there, they go to church together, they go to school together, they recreate together. It's almost like a little town within the city out there. People see themselves as being part of that.

When you draw these arbitrary lines in the sand, they look to the leaders that they've always had in their community, and it makes it hard for them to look across the park, so to speak, at another leader or to look way east or way west across the river at someone else that they may not feel is totally aware of their situation or their living conditions. The people in this riding here have really grown up together. The ridings have grown together, and I think they see themselves as one. If the Electoral Boundaries Commission can see their way to leave them that way, I think they like to vote that way regardless of who their MLA is.

Mr. Evans: So Macleod Trail doesn't create that much of a division between west and east?

Mr. Ady: Macleod Trail does; it has. But Shawnessy and Somerset kind of grew up with Sundance at the same time. With our option 2 as we looked at what needs to happen, some of the options you're going to get for the west side of the city, if you've got a shift and,

you know, everything moves coming down, obviously we had to say: what can we do to accommodate? Macleod Trail is a natural dividing line there. If we had to lose two newer communities, Silverado is relatively new. They really haven't developed an identity yet. I couldn't say that for Somerset and Chaparral, though. They think of themselves as part of that south Calgary community.

Mr. Evans: If you went to option 2, I think I got you correctly that you haven't talked to the adjacent constituencies about that as an option, and we shouldn't take it that that would either be acceptable or that we could work out the math to be close to the quotient on the other constituencies along that south border of Calgary anyway probably.

Mr. Breeze: We have made contact with representatives of Calgary-Lougheed and Calgary-Hays, and I did send Calgary-Hays a copy of this presentation. I also sent them an e-mail a few days ago, because we hadn't actually finalized the document, and said that we knew they were over by 25 per cent and that for various reasons we're going to present a second option, in which we adopt Cranston, which is part of Calgary-Hays at present. I put my fingers in my ears waiting for the explosion to take place, but I didn't get a response. I'm not sure if no news is good news, but certainly the gentlemen had an opportunity to say that they need to come to the commission and make a representation. I don't believe Calgary-Lougheed is making any presentation; that's what I gathered. I think they're waiting to see what the commission comes up with in the draft report, and they may make a submission at that time.

Mr. Evans: I see.

Mr. Breeze: One thing, just an ancillary piece of information, did cause a lot of confusion in the last election. If you look at option 1, or on page 5, and you look at the southern boundary right where it crosses Macleod Trail, approximately in the middle of the map, you'll see the boundary goes through a community. Now, one can never prevent these situations totally because the road was moved after the boundary was put in. But I would ask the commission to seriously consider moving the southern boundary to the south to 226th Avenue, which is presently a very rural type of situation, and I don't think this situation would occur again. We had people coming to Calgary-Shaw to vote, and we said, "No, you've got to vote in Highwood, in Okotoks," and they were a little rattled about the situation.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Thanks to both of you. I appreciate it.

Dr. Archer: Well, thanks so much for the presentation and for these really useful maps. I think they're going to help us quite a bit in our work. As I look at the challenge that's presented by the three ridings at the south end of the city – Lougheed, Shaw, and Hays – it strikes me that option 1, while it preserves the integrity of the current constituency of Shaw, probably doesn't help us enough in dealing with the more general problem of: how do you accommodate three constituencies that are all substantially over the quotient? If you don't do something with the middle one, then you have these two large ones on either side of it. You know, it's hard just to work the math out to make sure that you end up with a certain level of population equality. So I'm really drawn to your second option, which provides a way of thinking about these three potentially as four constituencies. Then the obvious question would be: does that option pick up enough of Calgary-Hays to solve its problem of being more than 25 per cent over the average?

I guess what I would do is encourage you to share with us your views on, if we adopted option 2, whether it would be possible to, instead of picking up a total population of about 31,000, move closer to 35,000 or 40,000. Are there other communities, in other words, in Hays that would fit logically with Cranston in a reconfigured constituency of Shaw?

8:05

Mr. Breeze: I'll try and give you some of the numbers. My memory is very good but very short, so just bear with me a second. Right now we've picked up 5,200 in Cranston according to the 2006 census. In theory that would reduce Hays by 5,200; that would bring them down to 42,000. Once again, they would be about 10 per cent above the average. The commission may deem that okay.

As you encroach on other communities, you start picking up approximately 8,000 at a time and in some cases more. I did look at McKenzie. But Hays is quite a big riding, and when we start to look at the combinations and permutations of what you might be doing elsewhere in the city, it became unmanageable for us almost. I mean, we could sit here and have sort of 52 options, that if you did this, we'd want that, so we tried to be brief.

There might be a way of adopting more of Hays, but I don't think it's going to be that easy because I think we'd go from in option 2 our suggested population of 32,000 in round numbers, and if we pick up another 8,000, then we're back over the provincial average. I couldn't find a boundary in Hays that was sort of neat and tidy. McKenzie – I think it's McKenzie – goes a fair ways up on the Bow River side.

I've got to look at option 2. You know, when you look at option 2, you end up with this sort of Fish Creek boundary – and excuse me; I didn't draw the blue line exactly where Fish Creek was. I found that a bit too complicated. For simplicity I drew it through Fish Creek park. There's a community. Where it says "Fish Creek park," just above there is McKenzie. I think it's 10,000 or something. So there weren't really any natural things we could find, but we would be willing to take another look. That's for sure.

Dr. Archer: Okay. Because the legislation permits us to use data more recent than the 2006 census – that was our starting point and the data that were presented in the householder – the updates to the data that we've had included thus far have brought the average size to about 40,583. So it may be possible. If we're looking at communities of around, you know, 6,000, 7,000, or 8,000, then it might actually work pretty well if we can identify one or two. If your constituency association group wants to give that some additional thought, we'd certainly appreciate the advice.

Mr. Ady: Well, if you're going to include newer census data, then obviously Walden has since grown substantially. Where we're showing zero numbers on there, there are quite a few more people living there now. If you make that jump, we're going to be darn close, I think.

Mr. Breeze: Would it be possible to get that data from Edmonton, the later data that you're using?

The Chair: We have the overall population increases in Calgary for 2009, but we haven't got the hardware working to where we can break it down by community. We will have that.

Mr. Ady: So using the overall data, you're saying that your average can go to 40,000.

Mr. Breeze: I've got data – it's published by the city of Calgary – for 2008. Would that be sort of close enough?

The Chair: That would be helpful.

Mr. Dobbie: The Calgary data has come, and I understand from some other presenters that it may be available to you from the city as of now because that data has gone to Municipal Affairs. It just hasn't been integrated into the riding or the constituency mapping software, but the numbers themselves per neighbourhood, as we understand it, are available for Calgary for '09.

Mr. Breeze: For '09?

Mr. Dobbie: Yes. We just can't click and drag yet and automatically see the numbers.

Ms Jeffs: But that would be helpful, too, to get a sense of what the update was going to be, because clearly there's been a lot of growth in your area since 2006.

Mr. Breeze: I believe, if I understood you correctly, that you said that in using provincial data, the desired average per electoral district would go from 37,000 to 40,000.

Ms Jeffs: To 40,583.

Mr. Ady: That would be the average. That would be a good target to shoot for, and you can go above or below that by a few per cent.

Ms Jeffs: That's when we add all of the municipal data for the entire province to the 2006 data and divide by 87. That's the current sort of average, that we've only recently been working with. Yes, that would be a pretty good number. I don't think that's going to change too much more now.

The Chair: Bear in mind that we're required to work from the 2006 Canada census plus any other municipal or population numbers that have been accepted, as Calgary's have been, and bear in mind that the reason we don't have absolute numbers is that a lot of municipalities, particularly in the rural areas, haven't done a census since 2006. We're looking at some who have the 2009 data and some that have only the 2006. But it would be very helpful to have you look at it with the information you can get from the city and see what your thoughts are.

Mr. Breeze: Who would I direct that to? I have had some conversations with Karen, I believe, at the commission's office in Edmonton because we had some e-mail problems. Could I send it to her?

The Chair: You could. We have fax, mail, e-mail. We have it all, and the ladies at the back can give you any particulars you need for that.

Mr. Breeze: I think we'd prefer to use e-mail if we could because if we are relying on some diagrams, a fax sometimes doesn't come across as best as we would like.

The Chair: Understood.

Mr. Dobbie: There's a gentleman in the back right corner that you might want to talk with before you leave. Mr. Forgrave has a bunch of the stuff even in his head.

Mr. Breeze: Okay.

Dr. Archer: That's it for me. Thanks.

The Chair: Peter.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you. You win the prize for the first use of Google Earth in a presentation before this commission, and it is very helpful because it's quite obvious where there is room for development.

If I can just take you from the specific to the general for some principle issues. We've heard from the mayor of Edmonton and a number of presenters in Edmonton that they view the boundaries of that city as sacrosanct: do not reach outside of the city boundaries to create ridings. In Calgary do you have a position or sense of what the community here feels on that issue?

Mr. Breeze: Are you referring to something that people often refer to as 'rurban' ridings?

Mr. Dobbie: Right. We don't want to make assumptions about whether that applies in Calgary or not.

Mr. Breeze: I don't have a survey, but I was talking to someone today. You know, our MLA likes to keep flying at 25,000 feet over the community and deal with big issues. I would hate for her to get into a situation where someone in a riding just outside the city limits can keep 20 hogs in their backyard and someone inside the city can't have 20 hogs in their backyard, and we've got people requesting that provincial and municipal laws be changed so that it's more equitable. You get into those sorts of things. Building regulations, I know, are a municipal jurisdiction, but people don't really care what the jurisdiction is. They just want someone to talk to. So there are issues like that.

There is a note in our presentation that we did take a quick look at Highwood, and we did look at Foothills-Rocky View. We chose not to muddy the water. I believe Highwood could lose a couple of thousand on the 2006 census. Foothills could gain a couple of thousand. But we chose not to try and push our boundaries into the rural area. I know it's not a clear answer, but it was a decision we made.

8:15

Mr. Ady: One of the things that Paul also looked at was that we could have gone south and just included Heritage Pointe in the south – it's an urban riding in the middle of a rural area – which probably would have put us right up over 41,000, but it kind of wreaks havoc on Highwood, then, who's already starting.

Rural ridings, I think we in the city are not often as sensitive to just the geography that they encounter. The broader their boundaries get, the more difficult it gets to represent them. The travel times get prohibitive. We thought that it might not be a good idea to go down and pull a bunch of people out of existing Highwood right now to balance the ledger in Calgary and then leave Highwood underrepresented, so to speak. Certainly, that's something we could look at if the commission needed to do that. Homogeneously they would have similar ideas and thoughts to the riding we live in now, Calgary-Shaw. I mean, I don't think any of them are ranching or farming, but it doesn't really do much for Highwood as a constituency in terms of viability and numbers that you're obviously looking for.

Mr. Dobbie: It's just that we haven't had any specific representations on it yet in Calgary, and I just don't want to assume that it's a

nonstarter in Edmonton, but it might be on the table in Calgary. It seems, just reviewing your process, that you've eliminated it as an option in what you've brought today, and I'm raising it. If you do discuss this with other people within Calgary – you know, we can operate on the assumption that we honour the municipal boundaries of Calgary, take the population of 1 million plus, divide it by the quotient, and work within Calgary. That seems to be the indication that we have from other communities.

Mr. Ady: I suppose the other side is that you could always reach Highwood into Calgary and hive off a couple of communities. I don't know.

Mr. Dobbie: A further general principle question is that in your second proposal you're leaving room for growth. You're leaving a riding under the quotient, which by definition means that others will have to be above it. Mr. Evans has asked a number of presenters if there's agreement with this concept. It appears that suburban urban ridings, where they're basically the same type of people generally living in the same type of places, might be able to take a higher number of constituents than, say, a downtown urban riding that has a bunch of other challenges, whether it's immigrants or people needing more access to services. Have you discussed that with the people in your constituency, or do you have an opinion? It won't be binding on you, but has that come up in discussions? If we look at Calgary as a unit and it's going to be X ridings and we have to leave room for growth, can some ridings sustain a higher number of constituents than others based simply upon their demographics?

Mr. Breeze: Well, once again, I haven't sought opinions on this. I'll go back to 2001-2002. When we came to the commission back in those days, we came with the numbers that Calgary-Shaw is almost 90,000 people. We are the third-largest municipality in Alberta, and we don't have a high school or a hospital. Right there we said: the people of Calgary-Shaw need better representation. At that level we thought that the population was far too high.

I think a point could be made, as we've sort of made in our option 1, that at 44,000-plus it's still manageable by the MLA. I mean, it's still only an hour's drive across the riding north-south or east-west, less than an hour probably. So I suppose I'd have to say that talking for Shaw, a higher population could be acceptable.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you.

The Chair: Allyson.

Ms Jeffs: Yes. Thank you very much for the maps and the presentation. I just really have a question about natural boundaries. I note that in your preferred option 1 you maintain the Bow River as the boundary to the riding, but in option 2 you cross over there to include Cranston and start taking some from Hays. So I take it that there's enough community of interest in that southern area that, within reason, the river is not an insurmountable barrier, if I can use that, in terms of gathering people together, if necessary, to reconfigure the riding.

Mr. Breeze: In this particular case I don't think it's an impediment. Back in 2002 the commission's draft, if I remember it correctly, pushed us across Fish Creek into the riding of Calgary-Fish Creek. It was like a little point that went across. It was about a 12-kilometre journey to get from, for example, the MLA's office, which is near Sundance, up Macleod, up to Canyon Meadows Drive, all the way round. Without a map like this you just say: well, you just walk

across the creek, right? So I think they're obstacle specific, some of these things. We've said, "Oh, we can cross the river," and you say, "Well, okay; if you can cross the Bow River, why can't you cross Fish Creek?" But there is a natural – Highway 22 is a good highway. It's only a short distance from Sundance to get into Cranston, so I don't see it as an impediment.

Mr. Ady: I would agree. Also, the demographics of Cranston are quite similar to the demographics of people in Chaparral and Lake Sundance. They all have similar needs and desires: new schools. I mean, they're all new communities. The established communities would be north of Fish Creek. I would certainly agree with Paul. It's much easier to go east than to go north. To have north come south would create much more of an upset.

Ms Jeffs: So Fish Creek is more of a barrier than the Bow, then.

Mr. Ady: Our number 1 priority would certainly have you respect Fish Creek as a boundary if you could.

Mr. Breeze: One thing we looked at – let's go to attachment 1. If one looks at the western boundary of Shawnessy, Somerset, and Silverado, it's a street called James McKevitt. If you can flip over to 2 and sort of visualize where that boundary would be, it's just to the left of Shawnessy and Somerset. You'd come straight down. I can't recall the exact western boundary as you go further south, but let's assume it just goes due south to 226th Avenue for the moment.

We did look at keeping Silverado. Now, the data on Silverado from the 2006 census is almost zero – right? – so whether we kept it or whether we didn't, it didn't really make any difference, in theory, to the numbers. Looking at the 2009 data, I don't know how many folks are in Silverado, so one thing we could look at is keeping, if you like, that southwest quadrant that we gave up.

I do have a question of the commission. If you can visualize a fairly wide district at the bottom, in the south end, going to this point in the north end, do you folks kind of look at things and say, you know, "There's some gerrymandering going on here; a funny sort of shape has appeared"? There's nothing hideous about it; it would just be the way it worked out. So we could look at something like that.

Ms Jeffs: Okay. I'm sorry; show me that again. I'm flashing back to an earlier presenter who talked about a hockey-stick-shaped riding at one point. I think that was in Edmonton. Sorry.

You were thinking that it's possible to do something sort of along that boundary.

Mr. Breeze: This is option 2. We could continue the southern boundary to 226th Avenue, and we could come up to the west side of Silverado. So the riding has got this little point in the north and a big fat, excuse the expression, bottom to it. Clearly, that would be palatable in terms of not giving up a community.

Mr. Ady: And it would put us probably around the 40,000-person mark.

8:25

Mr. Breeze: We couldn't find a way of taking any of Lougheed.

Mr. Ady: And we kind of think that when the west side of Calgary starts moving and shaking, there's going to be some trickle push all the way down to accommodate some new ridings to go in on that west side. We think that's going to get taken up in Lougheed, so we wanted to leave some space to allow them to grow.

Ms Jeffs: Okay.

The Chair: Anything further?

Well, thank you both. This has been very helpful. One thing you might be interested in. There was a David Fryett who was presenting this afternoon and had a great deal of information that you might want to look at. He was looking at growth scenarios. It was a fairly detailed submission which might be of some assistance to you.

Mr. Ady: If David Fryett presented, he had numbers, and you can make bank on them. They'll be good.

The Chair: Mr. Dobbie has said that I can give you his copy of David's submission.

Mr. Ady: Oh, great. Let me get that from you.

Mr. Dobbie: It's a PowerPoint that you could get from him by e-mail as well.

Mr. Ady: You bet. Okay.

Mr. Breeze: Thank you.

The Chair: All right. Thank you both again. It's been very helpful, and we look to receiving any further information you may have.

Mr. Breeze: Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ady: Thanks very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms Friesacher: Our next presenter is Mayor Patricia Matthews.

**Patricia Matthews, Mayor
Patrick Bergen, Deputy Mayor
Town of Chestermere**

The Chair: For the record would you both give us your names?

Mrs. Matthews: My name is Mayor Patricia Matthews, with the town of Chestermere, and this is Deputy Mayor Patrick Bergen.

The Chair: All right. Thank you.

Mrs. Matthews: We have for you a written submission, that was faxed to the head office, and then I just have a speech prepared for you this evening that I'd like to give you whenever you're ready.

The Chair: Please, go right ahead.

Mrs. Matthews: Great. Thank you. Good evening, lady and gentlemen. On behalf of Deputy Mayor Bergen, council, and staff I would like to thank you for allowing us to make this presentation this evening. We understand you have had a long day already. We like to think of ourselves as efficient in Chestermere, so we will not be taking the entire 10 minutes to present our case.

As you are well aware, the constituency of Airdrie-Chestermere was formed in 2004. Even at that point the two municipalities had many areas in common, and over the years those commonalities have continued to grow. Both areas have provincial highways that intersect the community, and both are projected to have the future

ring road around Calgary touch their borders. Infrastructure similarities extend to sewer and water provision as well. Both municipalities rely on the city of Calgary to provide this service. Storm water is also linked in both communities to the Western irrigation district canal system. The infrastructure commonalities, however, do not create a competitive situation that may make it difficult for a single provincial MLA to fairly represent both areas. Rather, the opposite because each set of pipes and road has aged at a different rate, and when one requires upgrades, the other is in its mid-life cycle.

Both areas share some of the same agencies like home care and the Marigold library systems and are even in the same Alberta health district. Chestermere and Airdrie are serviced by the Rocky View school division and the K Division of the RCMP. When demands for increased service levels occur in any of these agencies, provincial representation is complementary to both municipalities.

While Chestermere and Airdrie have both undergone similar growth pains, one grew as a city, and the other grew as a town. Chestermere has been able to use the city of Airdrie as a mentor in many of these growth situations, and our provincial MLA has been able to draw on the experience of both when representing the needs of both communities. While data is still being gathered in this area, I don't believe Airdrie has ever lost a provincial grant to Chestermere, solidifying the argument that both places can be effectively and efficiently represented by one MLA. From a regional perspective, both Chestermere and Airdrie belong to the Calgary Regional Partnership and have similar land-use requirements and transit needs, albeit at different levels, and so can be effectively represented provincially as well.

Chestermere has always been proud of our independence and has actively worked to establish our own identity in the region. We have worked well with our neighbours to accomplish our goals while still remaining autonomous. To that end, in establishing new electoral boundaries, we ask that you as the deciding body appointed by the province do not consider amalgamating our community with any that exist with the city of Calgary. The city and the town of Chestermere have too much diversity to make representation by one MLA reasonable. The demographics, the infrastructure, and the service providers act on completely different planes. While the city of Airdrie is the next step in growth compared to the town, the city of Calgary is not even on the same staircase.

Politically it would be difficult to argue for another grant for Chestermere if others had already been awarded to Calgary. The city has so many more resources available to them as a whole, from financial to staff, that Chestermere wouldn't have a chance at competing for provincial attention. If Chestermere were to be paired into any section of the city, we strongly feel that we would lose our autonomy. It would be unrealistic to expect that one MLA could fairly represent such a dissimilar riding. Our voice as a small town would be lost in Edmonton, and our residents would suffer because of it.

In taking into account where the correct placement of the town of Chestermere should fall, we would point out that aligning our town with one of similar magnitude would be counterproductive. The situation with our closest neighbours in size would lead to a competitive situation for resources as well as MLA time and attention. Our focus is on urban growth beside a major urban centre whereas other municipalities in the east have greater rural influences and considerations. Our commercial and health needs are the same, but our health providers and infrastructure needs are completely different. Each set of residents would be better served with its own MLA representative.

To summarize, we are here today on behalf of the town of

Chestermere to ask that you give consideration to our requests regarding electoral boundaries. We believe that we have accurately discussed the pros and cons of our future placement. First and foremost, we have seen great representation in our current riding and believe our residents would not be adversely affected in staying in the Airdrie-Chestermere constituency. We understand, of course, that the boundaries will be reviewed again in the next few years, and the situation may be different at that point.

Secondly, we feel that if you cannot allow for us to stay in our current arrangement, the best possible option would be a boundary that included our rural neighbours, with Chestermere as the larger municipality. In this manner we could possibly mentor smaller communities in the way that Airdrie has mentored us. There are several communities that are up and coming in growth, such as Langdon and Conrich, that could benefit from our experience and provide experience to our new MLA.

Finally, we ask that including us with the city not be considered as a viable option. It would do a great disservice to the taxpayers of Chestermere to be underrepresented by a Calgary MLA, and we would lose our voice in parliament as well as our autonomy in provincial recognition.

Thank you for your time here tonight. If there are any questions that are outstanding after this evening, please feel free to contact us in any manner you see fit.

The Chair: We'd like to ask you some questions tonight.

Mrs. Matthews: Absolutely. I'd be surprised, actually, if you didn't.

Dr. Archer: Well, Mayor Matthews, thanks so much for the presentation and for coming to share your views tonight. As you're probably aware, the commission is able to work with data from the 2006 federal census in addition to other, more recent census data that municipalities have conducted. It's interesting in comparing the more recent census data, from 2008-2009, for Airdrie-Chestermere with the 2006 data because your growth has been absolutely phenomenal, both in Airdrie and in Chestermere, and to a certain extent it has kind of magnified some of the problems that we're finding in ensuring that all of the constituencies fit within the mandated variation from the provincial average.

Just to bring you up to date with the data that we're working with, the published data, of course, was that your constituency had a population of 53,600 using the 2006 data, but by adding the updated data, we have you at almost 66,000 now, with growth in Airdrie just over 9,000 and growth in Chestermere just over 3,000, so your riding currently is one of the largest in the province populationwise. The challenge that we're going to confront is that if we keep Airdrie and Chestermere together, given that growth rate I'm not even sure if we're going to be able to fit within the current plus or minus 25. Right? That's the challenge that we're going to be working with.

8:35

Maybe I can just put a couple of scenarios out and get you to respond to them to provide us with some guidance as to the kind of options that would be most preferred. One option, of course, would be to look at Airdrie as a community that exists within two constituencies. One is on the east and includes Chestermere and parts east, and another part of Airdrie links up with communities on the west of it. That would be one solution to the challenge. Another solution would be to keep Airdrie essentially on its own – I suspect that once we look at the data just for Airdrie, it's going to be pretty close on its own to the quotient – and then go with the option that I think you

were alluding to near the end of the presentation, which is to look at Chestermere as kind of an anchor part on the western part of a constituency that extends eastward. I just wonder if you could comment on those two scenarios.

Mrs. Matthews: Sure. I can't comment on Airdrie's growth because I don't have those numbers, so I would be remiss in giving you any kind of data with that. I would ask one question that you would likely have more access to the answer to than I would, and that is: does our constituency as it exists now have a disproportionate amount of grant dollars allocated to it compared to other constituencies? I would ask you to take that into consideration as well.

From a split standpoint, once again I can't comment on whether Airdrie would be happy or unhappy with having its constituency split. I presume and I would guess – and I'm sorry to do that – that you are looking, then, at amalgamating that riding perhaps with Cochrane and areas to the west of the city and having the eastern half of Airdrie residing in its current constituency boundaries, or are you thinking of tightening that up even further?

Dr. Archer: That's probably a stronger statement. We're not thinking about doing it as much as exploring all of the potentials that exist.

Mrs. Matthews: Sure. Okay. As I've said before, you know, we are very happy with our current representation at the provincial level, and I would really be disappointed to lose some of the momentum that we have made with that representation in the Legislature. We have several projects that we're working on – well, major projects – for the town of Chestermere that have been carried forward since 2008, so if we were looking more at an independent scenario outside of the one that we currently exist in, I would hesitate to lose that momentum.

From an independent standpoint, we think that we would certainly be able to provide guidance to areas like Langdon and Conrich, that are expected to grow significantly. Conrich, as you may or may not know, has been identified as a growth node within the Calgary Regional Partnership and will have up to 10,000 people in it in the next few years, depending on how the economy is, I'm sure. That would tie in nicely with the kind of numbers that I think you're looking at, that 37,000 kind of range, with our growth projections. Langdon is in there, Indus, Conrich, and even if you include Balzac or Irricana for that matter.

If we can't exist as we are today – and I understand that that would be difficult to maintain – our next choice would be to create our own boundary that would allow us, then, to mentor those communities and show them some of the growth patterns that we've gone through. We think that will help from an MLA perspective as well because we've already gone through that situation and had the conversations with provincial government and would be able to offer guidance.

The Chair: So you would be saying: take Chestermere, and go east.

Mrs. Matthews: I would say: take Chestermere, and go north and south and a little east. I would hesitate, as I alluded to, to include a community like Strathmore in with us because we do have competing interests. We are roughly the same size and therefore would be asking for the same type of provincial dollars. I don't know how an MLA would prioritize who to make an argument for if we were both looking for infrastructure dollars to upgrade roads or we were both looking for health infrastructure, how that would be argued at a

provincial level and still be fair. So I hesitate to say that we would like to see us in a boundary with Strathmore, but I think the rural scenario that I've outlined for you would be very beneficial to us and to our neighbours as well.

The Chair: You understand that, unfortunately, by the law we can no longer leave Airdrie-Chestermere in one.

Mrs. Matthews: It was the first choice, thankfully not the only one. Our biggest concern is to make sure that we are not amalgamated into the city of Calgary, which would effectively wipe us off the map.

Dr. Archer: No. That was heard loud and clear.

Mrs. Matthews: Thank you. I was going to wear my T-shirt, but I thought that might be a little . . .

The Chair: No. That's fine.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you, Mayor Matthews and Deputy Mayor Bergen. We have already heard a presentation from the Airdrie-Chestermere PC Constituency Association. Have they shared their proposal with you?

Mrs. Matthews: We've sort of missed each other. Ships in the night, I have to say.

Mr. Dobbie: Okay. I take it you know the individuals. I can give you my copy as well because it will all be downloaded. But they've come up with a proposed constituency that is congruent with your hopes, which is Airdrie-Chestermere together. They didn't use the updated numbers. Again, I just wanted to make sure you knew that was available.

I'm not certain if we're hearing directly from anyone representing the city of Calgary. We haven't today. I can tell you that in the city of Edmonton it was clear from the mayor and everyone that we cross-examined on the question that the boundaries of the city of Edmonton should be viewed as sacrosanct: take the city of Edmonton, take the population, divide it by the quotient, and allocate the seats within there. I've been asking other presenters for any feedback on creating ridings that reach outside of Calgary, and I don't think people have addressed their mind to it clearly.

While we want specific information, we are also trying to develop some basic principles, and it appears from what we've heard further north that a basic principle should be that we do not reach outside of the major centres. So we have heard you, but also your message is consistent with what we've heard from Edmonton and, I suspect, what we will hear from Calgary. I think a lot of that is so that Calgarians and Edmontonians know they're getting fair representation, and otherwise they might not feel that way.

I would also ask if you could take some time before October 13 to get the updated numbers and work them yourselves and provide us with a drawing or with a map that shows your proposals.

Mrs. Matthews: Certainly.

Mr. Dobbie: It is helpful for us to have multiple iterations to work from and also to see whether your proposals are consistent with others in your area.

Mr. Bergen: What are you looking at? What numbers would you like to use?

Mr. Dobbie: The quotient we have now is 40,583, the total population figures we have divided by 87. That's the average that we are looking from. Twenty-five per cent above or below are the maximum variations. You certainly wouldn't qualify.

Mr. Bergen: As far as the census numbers, though, do you want the 2006?

Mr. Dobbie: No. The 2009. I believe that your 2009 numbers have likely gone to Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Bergen: They're significantly different. Yeah.

Mr. Dobbie: We likely have them included in the global totals, but we don't have your individual numbers on the map yet. I believe that Airdrie and Chestermere will continue to grow over the next eight years or 10 years before there's another commission. If we have you at the average or above the average now, that will be exacerbated over time because if anywhere is going to grow, it's going to be in these areas. I'd ask you: are you prepared to live with that? Basically, the higher number of constituents in that constituency: it sounds like you're prepared to trade that off to keep the two communities together if that's possible.

Mrs. Matthews: Mr. Dobbie, I think we have to take into consideration what our residents tell us, and when they have concerns, they're very vocal about them. Their biggest concern with potentially shifting boundaries at this point is us becoming part of Calgary. We've had no concern voiced in any kind of numbers to any of our council or otherwise that indicate that there would be any issue remaining with Airdrie-Chestermere.

8:45

We see that we grow in parallel, and so, as I've outlined, our asks are different from a provincial level, but we have so many similarities that I think from a single MLA perspective we wouldn't be overtasking that particular individual despite the potential growth. I think you'll see that with Chestermere's growth in 2009 we've slowed significantly, as, I believe, have all of our neighbours surrounding Calgary and Calgary itself. Typically Chestermere runs about 1 per cent of Calgary's growth. To give you a short answer on that: yes.

Mr. Dobbie: For the would you rather question: we'd rather be together and take a higher number. Thank you.

Mrs. Matthews: You're welcome. Can I ask for clarification? You were looking for us to provide you with a map. Were you looking specifically for our imagined potential boundary?

Mr. Dobbie: Your proposed ridings – option (a), option (b) – if Airdrie's growth simply doesn't allow us on the 2009 numbers. We'd like your input.

Mrs. Matthews: Okay. The reason that, of course, we've come today with an alternate to that scenario is because we recognize the growth pressures on both communities. So I don't think we would be at all shocked if the commission came back to us and said: this just isn't possible. We would be disappointed that we would lose that momentum on the projects that we're working on. But, really, I think that would mean we would have to put our MLA to an awful lot of work before they changed.

The Chair: I think we can tell you now that we don't have under the law the ability to leave you together.

Mrs. Matthews: Thank you, sir. I appreciate that.

The Chair: Allyson.

Ms Jeffs: Yes. Thank you very much, Mayor Matthews and Deputy Mayor Bergen. I just have a small question on the second option if, in fact, Airdrie and Chestermere cannot stay together and you're looking at Chestermere and the surrounding communities. I note some of the communities currently in the riding. I think you mentioned Irricana, but there's also, you know, Beiseker, I think, and Kathryn. You sound comfortable. Are you confident enough that those are sort of communities of interest there? They appear to be a little more rural, but that wouldn't create an awkward marriage, if I can use that analogy?

Mrs. Matthews: I don't think so. In any riding you need leadership in different areas, and I think Chestermere would be excellent to provide that. We've undergone some immense growth pressures. We've had to upgrade infrastructure, both provincially and within our municipality, and we share a lot of similarities with our rural neighbours as well in that, you know, we do work very closely together, not only on a regional level but in water and waste-water controls, I guess, is the best way to put it.

Mr. Bergen: I would say, too, that Chestermere 10 years ago would be in a similar situation to many of these communities. Growth was, I think, around 2,800 people in 1999, in that range. So, yeah, the issues they're facing – actually there is current council right now that were around at that time and would provide good mentorship for communities like that.

Ms Jeffs: All right. That's the only question I had. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Brian.

Mr. Evans: Thanks, Chairman, and thanks, both of you, for a very clear presentation. My recollection of Chestermere – and I drive there for hockey fairly frequently – is that it doesn't have much of an industrial base at all, and certainly Airdrie does. If you were to separate off from Airdrie and take on Balzac or some of those other areas, you are going to take on more agricultural area, you're going to take some industrial, and then you're going to have more bedroom communities as well. Any concerns about that kind of a mix compared to the mix with Airdrie in terms of how you were able to separate, obviously quite well, the needs and the grant requests of the larger centre of Airdrie from what you were doing with Chestermere? Would the new configuration – number 2, number 3, or whatever option – create any additional issues for you just by virtue of the size of the components?

Mrs. Matthews: I don't think so. We've recently undergone an annexation that brought on 6,400 acres, so we are very aware of the agricultural requirements of our neighbours and how that impacts them. I think, again, there's enough dissimilarity there that our ask wouldn't be the same from a provincial level. And you're right on industrial, although we would invite you to drop by any time. We have a Tim Hortons now.

Mr. Evans: I don't quite call that industrial yet.

Mrs. Matthews: We're working our way there, Mr. Evans. We're working our way there. We are projected to start bringing in some smaller amounts of industrial, light industrial specifically, into the town. So in established areas like Balzac we can see a conversation going on there where they would be able to give us information on how that was put in place and, you know, some of the difficulties that maybe impacted them.

Mr. Evans: Just continuing, going east towards Strathmore, how far do you think you could go, reasonably, before getting into, as you said, a much more agriculturally oriented community like Strathmore? Highway 9?

Mrs. Matthews: Right as you do go down towards Langdon, actually, is a logical boundary, especially because Langdon is also expected to have some fairly intense growth in the next 10 years.

Mr. Evans: Most of the growth now is on the east side of the 9 in Langdon, right?

Mrs. Matthews: Yes.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Thanks very much. Appreciate it.

Mrs. Matthews: Absolutely.

The Chair: Thank you both very much. Very interesting suggestions, and we look forward to receiving further information from you. We would appreciate it if it was before the 13th of October.

Mrs. Matthews: Absolutely. Judge, where's the best place for us to send that?

The Chair: The ladies at the back will give you the e-mail, everything.

Mrs. Matthews: Great. Would you prefer it in electronic or printed matter? Does it matter?

The Chair: We can handle it either way. Whatever suits you people.

Mrs. Matthews: Well, you have enough on your plate right now, so if we can make your life a little simpler, we'll do it for you.

The Chair: Thank you. Thank you both.

Mr. Dobbie: Electronic gets around faster.

Mrs. Matthews: It does. Good luck with the rest of your hearings, and thank you for taking the time to hear us tonight.

The Chair: Thank you.

Now, I believe that's our last presentation for the evening, so we will adjourn until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning. Thank you all. We're now adjourned.

[The hearing adjourned at 8:53 p.m.]

