



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission  
Public Hearings

Edmonton

Wednesday, July 19, 2017  
12:57 p.m.

Transcript No. 27

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta**

**Electoral Boundaries Commission**

Justice Myra Bielby, Chair

Gwen Day  
Laurie Livingstone  
W. Bruce McLeod  
D. Jean Munn

**Support Staff**

Robert H. Reynolds, QC  
Shannon Dean  
Aaron Roth  
Shannon Parke  
Tracey Sales  
Janet Schwegel

Clerk  
Law Clerk and Director of House Services  
Administrator  
Communications Officer  
Communications Consultant  
Managing Editor of *Alberta Hansard*

## **Electoral Boundaries Commission Public Hearings – Edmonton**

### **Public Participants**

Sheila Aitken, Constituency Assistant, Stony Plain  
Jon Carson, MLA, Edmonton-Meadowlark  
Lorne Dach, MLA, Edmonton-McClung  
Mic Farrell, President, Edmonton-McClung NDP Constituency Association  
Alexandria Fisher  
Nicole Goehring, MLA, Edmonton-Castle Downs  
Christina Gray, MLA, Edmonton-Mill Woods  
Jim Hill  
Al Kemmere, President, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties  
Chris Nielsen, MLA, Edmonton-Decore  
Philip Penrod  
Kieran Quirke, Vice-chair, Leduc-Nisku Economic Development Association  
Heather Sobey, Whitecourt-St. Anne NDP Constituency Association  
Heather Sweet, MLA, Edmonton-Manning  
Jason Watt, McLeod Community League  
Berend Wilting, Vice-president, Edmonton-Castle Downs NDP Electoral District Association  
Carol Wodak



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[Justice Bielby in the chair]

**The Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I think we'll get started now. I'd like to thank you all very much for coming to participate in this public hearing of the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

I'd like to start by introducing us. I'm Myra Bielby. I'm a justice of the Court of Appeal of Alberta living here in Edmonton. At the moment I'm chairing the Electoral Boundaries Commission. My fellow commissioners are, on my far left, Ms Jean Munn from Calgary; Ms Laurie Livingstone from Calgary; to my immediate right, Mr. Bruce McLeod, mayor of Acme, Alberta; and to his right, Gwen Day, who's from Carstairs. Together we're the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

We've been given a job as set out in this act called the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, which requires a commission every eight to 10 years to examine the boundaries of the constituencies within the province and decide whether to make recommendations to the Legislature for any changes in those boundaries to better ensure that each Albertan is effectively represented in the Legislature.

We started this work last October. The first result of it was an interim report containing 87 recommendations, one for each of the constituencies in the province. We didn't recommend changes for every one, but we talked about every one. It looks like this in hard copy, but it's available to the public online at [abebc.ca](http://abebc.ca). I invite you to look at it if you haven't, and you can perhaps get more details on what we're going to be saying here today. Our task now, in this second round of public hearings, is to get feedback from the public on our 87 recommendations and to consider whether any should be changed as a result.

This started off with a first round of public hearings in January and February. We sat in 14 different locations in the province to get initial input. We also received 749 written submissions, and I was particularly grateful for that level of interest. This time, to get feedback on our interim recommendations, we sat in Grande Prairie on Monday. Yesterday we were in Vermilion, and we had a hearing here last night. Today: morning and afternoon in Edmonton. We're driving to Calgary. We've got three hearings tomorrow, morning, afternoon, and evening, then finish the week in Brooks on Friday. Then on Monday we're in Red Deer.

As a result of that, we're going to look at our recommendations then and devise a final report to the Legislature, which we have to file before the end of October. Then it's up to the Legislature to determine what legislation should be enacted to implement those recommendations before the next provincial election so they're in place for planning for the next provincial election. It sounds like a lot of lead time, but apparently the chief returning officer needs about a year, if there are going to be changes made, to implement all of the changes to ensure a trouble-free election, so that's why the timing has been set out in the act.

In our work we are legally required to follow certain steps in relation to each constituency to arrive at a recommendation. These steps are set out in the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act as interpreted by the Supreme Court of Canada and our Alberta Court of Appeal, long before I was a judge on the Court of Appeal. The process starts by looking at what the average constituency size in Alberta would be if all constituencies were exactly the same. That's relevant only because it's a starting point. We're not recommending that any constituency be this average number of 46,697, but we're told that's the place we're to start our journey. How we came up with that number is that we took the 2016 federal census figure for

Alberta's population, 4,062,609 people, divided it by our 87 constituencies, and our average number then becomes 46,697.

To use that number by way of example, we compared that to the current population of, say, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock, a riding just north of Edmonton: 45,030 people in that riding, 8 per cent below the provincial average. Our recommendation is to leave it alone, to make no changes. But, by comparison, in Edmonton-South West, where we're 91 per cent over the provincial average because of the rate of growth in that area – it was at provincial average eight years ago; it has now almost doubled in size, has had such a fast growth rate. Then we have to obviously make a recommendation in regard to that because the votes in that constituency – were an election to be held tomorrow, an MLA would require twice the number of votes to be elected than if he or she was living in Barrhead. So that's essentially the nature of our work.

This has happened because the population has grown so quickly in Alberta. Even taking into account the people who left Alberta as a result of the oil and gas downturn, our population grew by more than 600,000 people in the last eight years, more than 14 per cent, the fastest growth rate in Canada. The next is the city of Vancouver, at 6.9 per cent. So when you look at Vancouver, see how big it is, you get a bit of a flavour for what has happened in Alberta.

Of course, the people moving in, largely from eastern Canada, have not moved equally into each of the 87 constituencies. They've tended to favour certain constituencies – Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, and Fort McMurray, in particular – so the growth rate in those constituencies has been much higher than the growth rate in other areas of the province. That's how you get this big disconnect, where some ridings are so far above the provincial average and some so far below, even though we're just eight years after they were all more or less equal.

The law requires us to start with the 46,697. We compare it to the actual figure in a constituency, and then we decide whether, in our view, there should be a change to the boundaries of the constituency to make it larger, to bring in more people, or to make it smaller, to reduce the size of the population, to contribute to the ability of the MLA to represent the people living there.

Other factors that we have applied and are obliged to consider in each case are common community interests and organizations. When we're looking at constituency design, we try to avoid cutting up a community. That doesn't just mean a town or a village, but it could be a group sharing the same ethnicity, a group sharing the same source of income. Each one of us belongs to a number of communities of interest in our lives, I'm sure, so our goal is to try to avoid cutting them up where possible. Sometimes it's not possible, but that's certainly a goal in our minds.

Second consideration: the act says that for Edmonton and Calgary we're to try to avoid crossing neighbourhood boundaries. For example, in Edmonton we have this lovely colour-coded map of all of the neighbourhoods of Edmonton. This is Calgary. Thank you. Is Edmonton not colour-coded? In our work we've tried to honour those neighbourhood boundary lines where we can. Now, that's not always been possible. Some neighbourhoods in Calgary are much larger than 47,000 people, so even a neighbourhood can be over, but we're obliged to consider that and try to avoid cutting them up if possible.

1:05

We're to try to avoid cutting up towns, villages, cities if possible. Our interim recommendations would honour this in regard to all cities, towns, and villages in the province except for those cities where the population is large enough to make one constituency but not large enough to make two. For example, Grande Prairie has 63,000 people. That's one and a half constituencies, so we can't

give them two, obviously, but, you know, there has to be some blending of a city and a rural area there to deal with that situation. Otherwise, in Edmonton, as we're sitting here in Edmonton right now, the proposed 20 constituencies for Edmonton all fall within Edmonton's boundary, and no other constituency falls within Edmonton's boundary, so we've been able to achieve that goal in regard to Edmonton.

We're also asked to follow natural boundaries if we can – this is to try to help the voter remember what constituency they live in – and these are usually rivers. If you see a squiggly line on the map on a constituency boundary, that's invariably because that's a river or a ravine. We also try to follow major roadways because people remember those as being the boundaries, highway 2, highway 16. If possible, we've tried to do that.

Other factors that we've considered, because the act says that we can consider other things that we think might be relevant to effective representation, are projected growth rates in an area. We haven't received much hard evidence on what projected growth rates are in certain areas of the province, but where we've received it, we certainly have considered it. Otherwise, we've considered the possibility that rapid growth areas will continue to rapidly grow, and areas which haven't grown at the same rate as the province will probably continue on that basis. That was the philosophy for leaving, for example, in Calgary some growth room at the edge of the city in those constituencies where there are still neighbourhoods being constructed right now for single-family homes because certainly the growth rate in those areas, the population in those areas will be much larger over the next eight years. It'll be continually growing.

Finally, we've considered communication ease and communication challenges within a constituency, how easy it is for people to get around to contact their MLA, for the MLA to contact them, as a consideration as to what's required for effective representation.

Finally, we've been receiving public input from all over the province in writing. As of Friday we had about 500 written submissions this time around, and of course we've had a great turnout at this round of public hearings. Thanks very much for coming and being part of that. We are interested, of course, in hearing anyone's submissions about what they think should be done to any constituency generally, not necessarily an Edmonton constituency.

Particularly helpful to us, I think, is the idea that people submit ideas for particular changes. For example, yesterday, in regard to Fort Saskatchewan-Vermilion the MLA made certain specific changes on the map, suggested we could do this and do that, and it moved 700 people around, which maybe doesn't sound like a lot, but there was a good reason for making that change. We were happy to hear that, and we made particular note of that, and that's certainly achievable. Pragmatic, useful suggestions are particularly welcome here.

We'll put these all into the hopper when we start our deliberations next week, produce a final report, and that will have to be filed with the Speaker, it says there, on October 24, which is a little bit generous to us. We have to file it by October 23, in fact. Then it's up to the Legislature to enact legislation. Those of you familiar with our work will know there's also been a minority report prepared and filed by Mrs. Day, and she has a different view as to what should happen here. The legislation will have to be produced by the Legislature – that's not our job; we're just making recommendations – and hopefully we'll see a new constituency map, at least to a degree, in time for the next provincial election.

With that said, I'm going to call our first speaker, but I should make you all aware that *Hansard* is here. They're taking down

everything that we say. An audio recording and a written transcript of those comments will be available at our website, abebc.ca, later today or tomorrow. Anyone can listen to them, so know that if you speak, it's like anybody can listen to what you're going to say. I'm gratified, if somewhat surprised, to find out how many people have actually tuned in and listened at home to what we've been saying.

Our first registered speaker is Carol Wodak. If you'd come forward. I'd ask everybody who speaks this afternoon to start by advising us of the name of the constituency in which you reside. Thank you.

From this it looks like you reside in Sherwood Park.

**Ms Wodak:** I do, and I spoke to you in the first round in the vain hope that Sherwood Park could be reunited, but I understand why that's not possible. When we started to respond to your interim report, it was with great thanks to you for doing something that made sense mostly and for your persistence and your consideration of all kinds of factors that we know on the ground are important to people. I think you haven't had complete information in that respect, and I would like to give you a suggestion for that later.

But for now the original draft of our response consisted of two points. One is that we're entirely content with what you've recommended for Sherwood Park.

Two, we would like to ask you to reconsider your proposals for the Fort Saskatchewan, Vermilion-Lloydminster, and Stettler-Wainwright boundaries. The first submission in that package deals with that in some detail. I'm sorry; I haven't been able to make a recommendation about what you should be doing. What we did was to talk to our neighbours in Fort Saskatchewan and make contact with people in other areas and take a look at the local media from those areas to see that everybody is really unhappy about it. Well, not everybody, but everybody who bothered to communicate was not happy with it. I think the suggestions for changes should probably come from them.

We would like to ask you, first of all, to keep the voter parity in mind. In my opinion, that is a fundamental premise of our electoral democracy. From there, try to make the areas as compact and respectful of existing community patterns and so on as you can.

What bothers me about that particular riding – actually, there are three – is that they are so long and narrow. The normal communication systems do not operate that way in that part of the country, as I know from previous experience with it. They tend to operate around a centre point and sometimes between the centre point but not right across the province.

I'll leave you with that. If you have questions about that, I'll try to answer them.

At the eleventh hour, just as I was about to submit my proposal online, I learned that our neighbouring constituency association was about to make a recommendation to move two subdivisions from Sherwood Park into their constituency. The reason I was given – and this was quite informal – was that the population in those two subdivisions was very young and Strathcona-Sherwood Park was concerned that their age was a tiny bit above the provincial average.

Given that this was on Saturday, I just made a reference in my first submission giving you context about Strathcona county and Sherwood Park, which you might find useful, and I think I put a map or two in there as well. I spent the rest of the weekend doing some research about those particular areas and perhaps why they should or should not be moved, and that's the second, the supplementary, submission that I've got there. I've copied an extract from the neighbourhood map to show you exactly where they are. I didn't know there were three. I only learned that this morning. The third one is the one just to the right of Emerald Hills and Aspen Trails.

1:15

Sherwood Park is not a town; it's a specialized urban service area. Strathcona county believes in planning to the last detail well in advance. These communities were planned in about 2003-2004. The first bylaw that I saw was in 2004. Sometimes those plans have been changed, but they're staged developments. What they developed first were individual family homes. It's easier to sell, I think. Now they're putting in congregate living facilities, and there are plans for a long-term care facility and for other seniors' supported residential facilities, so the age of those subdivisions is going to change within the next few years because you only need one seniors' retirement residence to bring the age range way up.

The total population of the two that I looked at, Emerald Hills and Aspen Trails, is under 3,000 from last year, so the county told me. The age was clearly not a factor. In fact, the age ranges in both Sherwood Park and Strathcona county are very similar, and they're similar to the Alberta age range. There's no difference there, no significant difference at all.

The other reason that was expounded this morning was that the subdivisions had been planned at the same time. Now, Strathcona county does this urban village concept. Each of those subdivisions has been planned as an urban village complete with schools, complete with institutional facilities, with public services, with parks and trails and everything else and shopping divisions. They're not dependent on each other, but Sherwood Park is clearly the commercial centre for all of that region.

There are in fact commercial developments in that bit of Sherwood Park which is to the east of Clover Bar Road. They're new, they're not as well developed as those in downtown Sherwood Park, but they're coming. They are. In fact, there have been specific recommendations for commercial and retail development in other areas of the county, in the hamlet areas and the new urban service areas. I think it's a question of growth pains. I don't want to lose those two divisions. We have been working with those for some years. I have never heard them ask to leave us. They're an established part of the constituency of Sherwood Park.

Do you have any questions about that?

**The Chair:** I don't.  
Mr. McLeod.

**Mr. McLeod:** No.

**Mrs. Day:** Just for clarity, just to make sure that I understand what you're saying, what was mentioned this morning: Summerwood, Aspen Trails, memorial trails?

**Ms Wodak:** Aspen Trails and Emerald Hills.

**Mrs. Day:** Emerald Hills. Okay. You'd prefer them to stay with what is called Sherwood Park proper as opposed to going into Strathcona-Sherwood Park.

**Ms Wodak:** Yes.

**Mrs. Day:** Okay.

**Ms Wodak:** In fact, if they'd like to give us Summerwood, we'd take it.

**The Chair:** So you don't want to let go, but you would accept.

**Ms Wodak:** Well, it's a very artificial boundary, that Clover Bar Road. It does split along the urban area. It's unfortunate, but that's necessary.

**The Chair:** Thank you.  
Ms Munn.

**Ms Munn:** I don't have any questions.

**The Chair:** Ms Livingstone.

**Ms Livingstone:** No. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thanks very much. Thanks for coming and making a concrete, easy-to-understand rebuttal.

**Ms Wodak:** I have two suggestions for you, quite apart from constituencies. One is that I sew and I cook, and if the pattern doesn't work, nothing turns out right. I suspect that there's a wrong pattern, with how we're dividing up our population somehow. There shouldn't be so much need for variance if the recipe was right. I don't really know what the options are. I did take a quick look at Saskatchewan, and they have quite a different approach. I'm not recommending that, but I do suggest that perhaps we could have somebody look at what the options might be so that variances were not such a continual problem.

The second . . .

**The Chair:** If I can just take those in order, that's our job, to look at that and come up with it. Saskatchewan has different legislation, so they're forbidden from considering common communities of interest. They can break up municipalities. They can do whatever. That's not open to us, and we're required to follow the law. I mean, that seems like a basic concept, but that's where we are.

**Ms Wodak:** Absolutely. Perhaps the law needs to be changed to consider something that might work a little easier here. It is possible that there's another recipe.

**The Chair:** Well, we don't change the law here on the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

**Ms Wodak:** I know. Can you recommend that, that a look be taken at it?

**The Chair:** You're asking that we recommending what?

**Ms Wodak:** That a look be taken at the way in which the population is counted or the way in which the constituency is divided. What happens in Saskatchewan is that a great part of the province is simply excluded from that constituency number.

**The Chair:** You're asking that we recommend to the Legislature that the legislation be changed to take out all criteria except voter parity?

**Ms Wodak:** No, I'm not. I'm asking that you recommend to the Legislature that they set up a committee or a commission or something to look at alternatives that would result in a little more simplified but more effective way of dividing the constituencies to maintain voter parity, among other things.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Ms Wodak:** The second suggestion. This is the first time that I've been involved with the Electoral Boundaries Commission. What I've noticed since I've been reading the submissions and listening to the hearings is that people come and think you're like Santa Claus and that if they ask for something, you'll reach into your bag and pull it out. It doesn't work like that. People come not prepared to give you numbers in terms of population or to show you a map of

what it is and what they'd like. I wondered if it could be possible for you to give some guidelines to people making submissions. One of the guidelines, based on my own experience just this weekend, is that you ask people who are making submissions that affect other people's boundaries to at least advise, if not consult with, the organizations, be it the political organizations, in those other constituencies so that everybody knows what's going on.

**The Chair:** If I can put this in a nutshell, you're suggesting for future electoral boundaries commissions, which will be eight to 10 years from now – we're not likely to be on that commission – that we suggest that people who sign up to make an oral presentation be given some assistance in what would be helpful to receive, and that includes specific suggestions, including maps demonstrating those suggestions, and that they advise others if their requests, if implemented, would significantly impact the boundaries of others' constituencies.

**Ms Wodak:** That's very nicely put. Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay. I think the first part of that is probably a little easier to achieve than the second.

**Ms Wodak:** It would be helpful because I don't think people came prepared to actually illustrate what they were saying. I will say that it's a very interesting and useful experience to have to do that kind of research. I learned a lot about my community.

**The Chair:** To say it editorially, part of the reason that we've been making a point of that is that people have come with many good suggestions but have not supported them by actually trying to make them work. We've been able to say, for example: "You know, we tried to add Stony Plain and Spruce Grove together and got 80,000. You can't put that in one constituency." It's helpful to have people work through the problem and then see if they actually can come up with a more helpful solution. I take your point on that.

**Ms Wodak:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any other questions or comments?

Okay. Thanks very much.

All right. Our next registered speaker is Adil Pirbhai. Oh. He's not here at the moment.

All right. We'll move on to Heather Sweet.

**Ms Sweet:** Good afternoon. I am Heather Sweet. I'm the MLA for Edmonton-Manning. I'd also like to introduce Jason Watt, who is a member of the executive for the McLeod Community League. Thank you again for having us here today to discuss the riding of Edmonton-Manning.

1:25

I represent the wonderful riding of Edmonton-Manning, and I'm very happy to see the very few changes that were recommended to the boundaries. I have found over the last two years of representing the people of Edmonton-Manning that the communities within the riding seem to share much in common, and it has been fairly straightforward working with all the different communities and determining their needs.

As an individual of Métis heritage I also want to commend the commission for their work to unite indigenous and Métis communities and voices wherever they could, giving them the opportunity to have a larger political influence that is more reflective of their important place in this province. The commission has done great work in general to try to draw a map that more accurately reflects the face of the province as it is today.

Now, as for the specifics of Edmonton-Manning the interim report has recommended just a few changes, helping to keep most of the communities and the neighbourhoods in the area intact. One exception to this is the boundary running down 58th Street northwest right through the community of McLeod. If you plot the boundary on Google Maps, it shows that it runs directly in between the McLeod community hall and the skating rink, which are 10 feet away from each other. In reality there isn't a dividing line between McLeod and Casselman. They both share schools, hockey rinks, and soccer fields. I would recommend, due to this, that we move the boundary in this part of the riding to follow 66th Street north and south. This would run in between as well, including 153rd to 144th Avenue. This also is the main road from 137th all the way to the Anthony Henday and the exit off the Anthony Henday, so 66th runs north and south all the way straight down.

Doing this, I think, will also help with balancing the populations of the two ridings between Edmonton-Manning and Edmonton-Decore. I understand that keeping constituencies at or near the average of the province was a major consideration which the commission has been trying to apply in its work. I appreciate this, but my experience as an MLA has been that, as you stated in your report, population shouldn't be the only consideration in the constituency.

**The Chair:** I'm just going to interrupt you before I lose this point.

**Ms Sweet:** Yeah. Sorry.

**The Chair:** Would you mind marking where you think that boundary change should be on my map here? Okay. Thanks very much.

**Ms Sweet:** In saying that, the Kilkenny component, that's on the other side of 66th street: that makes sense. I figured that was actually going to happen just because of the fact that it's in the Edmonton-Decore area as well already. If we go north and south on 66th street, the only difference would be that we wouldn't then be moving east into Edmonton-Manning. We would just keep it straight, and the western part of 66th Street would then be, as it's recommended, in Edmonton-Decore.

Part of this, again, is trying to keep the community together. The McLeod Community League represents a majority of the Casselman-McLeod area, so you actually would be splitting the community apart. Then the MLAs would represent a community league. Well, there you would have two MLAs instead of just the one.

**The Chair:** So that would add that population to Edmonton-Castle Downs – right? – from that area that you want moved out. It would take it from . . .

**Ms Sweet:** No. What would happen is that you would go straight down 66th Street. The riding already is 66th Street except for the Kilkenny jut-in little piece. It would basically keep Manning almost the same except for that one Casselman neighbourhood. What it would do is actually increase the population by 2 per cent. Edmonton-Decore would be actually plus 15 per cent potentially.

**The Chair:** So you would be increased to plus 2, but Edmonton-Decore would be increased to plus 15?

**Ms Sweet:** What we did – I have a tabling if you'd like to see the map – is that we looked at the whole city, because the problem is that the minute you start looking at one, it then impacts the rest of Edmonton.



**Ms Munn:** How do you know the population number for that half of McLeod?

**Ms Sweet:** Of Casselman? Oh. McLeod. Jason has it.

**The Chair:** It would be about 6,000 people in that little area. That's why the current population of Edmonton-Manning is 16 per cent over. In our recommendation we dropped it to 1 per cent under. That's the effect of taking out that little block.

**Ms Sweet:** So if we kept the 66th boundary as it is, with the McLeod-Casselman component it would be an increase of 2,226 voters. [interjection] Residents. Sorry. Potential voters.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. Not voters. We'd need to know the actual population.

**Ms Sweet:** It would be 2,226.

**The Chair:** Residents.

**Ms Sweet:** Based on the municipal census.

**The Chair:** Okay. But we're talking about residents, not voters.

**Ms Sweet:** Jason knows this better than me.

**The Chair:** Okay. How would it leave Edmonton-Decore? Because you're moving so many people back in, how would you pop Edmonton-Decore over by 15 per cent? Not by this single move.

**Ms Sweet:** Not by the single move. I think you're going to hear from some other areas around Edmonton-Decore because Edmonton-Decore is sort of in the middle of the north. When you look at some of the other recommendations for the north, I think that there's some bumping there. I do recognize that for Edmonton-Manning part of the reason for the change was that the expectation is that it's going to grow. I realize that. However, the potential growth that I think was expected has significantly slowed down.

**The Chair:** Could I ask you a face question here? If we took out that notch of Edmonton-Decore and added it back into Edmonton-Manning, how would that allow the people who reside in that area to be better represented in the Legislature?

**Ms Sweet:** The Kilkenny piece or . . .

**The Chair:** Well, whatever the little green square is.

**Ms Sweet:** The part that we would like to stay.

**The Chair:** This square here.

**Ms Sweet:** Yeah. The intent would be that 66th would be the natural boundary. The little piece that would be between 156 and 142 is in McLeod, and it is part of the McLeod community. They all go to the McLeod school. They all go to the Catholic schools in that community. They all typically are community league members that participate in sports and community activities. If you remove them and put them in Decore area, they don't belong to the Kilkenny Community League, so you're asking people to then go across the main 66th Street divide to be represented by an MLA without the community supports that they naturally access.

**The Chair:** Okay. A follow-up question: what other communities should we then remove from Edmonton-Manning if we wanted to offset that addition?

**Mr. Watt:** Not as part of the community league – the community league submitted a submission, but it really just deals with 66th Street – I personally submitted under my name. I did suggest a set of divisions that would change Edmonton-Decore, Edmonton-Manning, and Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, all of which would still fall well within your allowances for population variation, all of which would accommodate potential future growth over the next eight to 10 years.

**The Chair:** Okay. But just because we can go to 25 per cent over or under doesn't mean we should. We have to give reasons arising from the need for effective representation before we can move off voter parity. In answer to my question if you just break it down, what would you move out of Edmonton-Manning if we added those 2,226 people in?

**Mr. Watt:** Right. My written submission, Your Honour, was to move York – it's called the neighbourhood of York, but most people call it Steele Heights – which is the neighbourhood just immediately south. So 144th Avenue forms a more natural boundary than 58th Street that you're currently using; 144th Avenue is a busy east-west thoroughfare while 58th Street, as MLA Sweet had indicated, is a residential street. You would have people on opposite sides of a residential street in different ridings.

**The Chair:** So we'd move York-Steele Heights out of Edmonton-Manning to where?

**Mr. Watt:** Into Edmonton-Decore.

**The Chair:** And how many people roughly in York-Steele Heights?

**Mr. Watt:** According to the 2016 municipal census 3,901. Hand in hand with that, my written proposal is to bring Belvedere also into Edmonton-Decore, which gives Edmonton-Decore a large population, 56,706, which I know is at the upper edge of your permissible limits, but there are no growing neighbourhoods there.

**The Chair:** How much over variance would that be?

**Mr. Watt:** It's about 23 per cent. But over the next eight to 10 years that neighbourhood isn't going to grow. There are no expansion opportunities there outside of infill, and those neighbourhoods aren't attractive for infill yet, whereas you would leave both Edmonton-Manning and Edmonton-Belvedere-Clareview with the opportunity to absorb future growth.

1:35

**The Chair:** Is Belvedere in Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview now?

**Mr. Watt:** Sorry. Did I misspeak?

**The Chair:** No, you didn't say.

**Ms Sweet:** It is. You're thinking of Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

**Mr. Watt:** Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview. Yes. Sorry. I apologize. Yes, Belvedere is currently in Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

**Ms Munn:** Just below York.

**Mr. Watt:** Just below York. Exactly.

**The Chair:** And it has how many people, you said?

**Mr. Watt:** It has 5,169.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Anything else you'd like to say?

**Mr. Watt:** No. That's perfect. Thank you very kindly.

**The Chair:** Okay. Any questions? Ms Munn.

**Ms Munn:** I don't have any questions. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Ms Livingstone.

**Ms Livingstone:** No. To my own surprise I've been able to follow along on the map, so I understand what you're saying.

**Mr. Watt:** It makes sense on the map.

**Mrs. Day:** What I'm hearing you say is that when community interests bump up against voter parity, the community interests that you're giving don't – how do you say? – divide the community of the first one you mentioned, that the community interests override the desire for voter parity in your situation.

**Mr. Watt:** I would agree with that as of today, but I think that when you look at the next eight to 10 years, you'll accomplish the goal of voter parity as well.

**Mrs. Day:** In the one area, in the Edmonton-Manning area, but in the other area you're giving us reasons why you believe going up to 23 per cent above is suitable.

**Mr. Watt:** The area that wouldn't see any growth is the one that's going to that upper edge. The other two areas would be right at or near the target number, and they would experience growth over the next eight to 10 years. They would both have some outer ring neighbourhoods.

**Mrs. Day:** But the voters in Edmonton-Decore would have less of a vote weight.

**Mr. Watt:** Today they would be underrepresented.

**Mrs. Day:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**Ms Sweet:** I can give you the maps as to sort of what the changes would make and then how it would bump everybody.

**The Chair:** That would be helpful.

**Ms Sweet:** The other thing, just quickly – I apologize – is that I recognize that the percentages are important to the panel. I just want to make sure that when we're reviewing the percentages of the voter turnout and representation, the cities are also considered under the same as the rurals. We see on some of the proposals that the rural percentages are quite different. Some of them are quite high, and some of them are quite low. So I just would like to suggest that in the cities we also recognize that with that community component there is some give on the percentages of upper and lower the same as we are in our rural communities.

**The Chair:** Okay. That just brought something to mind. Obviously, we haven't considered this. This is a new idea, but if we were to agree with your proposal that that bump that cuts McLeod in half, that additional population be brought into Edmonton-Manning but not do any of the other changes that you recommend, would that still be an acceptable result? Or is this an all-or-nothing package you're asking for?

**Ms Sweet:** No. It would just increase Edmonton-Manning by 2 per cent. I mean, I'm at the end of the city, so for me the 2 per cent increase is just a natural boundary that makes sense because I go east out to Fort Saskatchewan. I think the other areas are going to be more impacted by any changes than Edmonton-Manning will be. I'm kind of lucky that way, to be honest.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much. He'll mark them, and they'll become part of the record relating to your submission. Thank you, Ms Sweet.

Okay. Our next registered presenter is Nicole Goehring.

**Ms Goehring:** Good afternoon. I'm Nicole Goehring, MLA for Edmonton-Castle Downs, and I'm joined at the table this afternoon by Berend Wilting, who is the vice-president for the Edmonton-Castle Downs electoral district association. It's an absolute honour to be here in front of you today. I've had a lot of respect for the amount of work that you've done over the last few months with this commission, and I'd like to thank you.

Chair, as you highlighted in your opening remarks this afternoon, Alberta has grown and changed a lot in the last 10 years, so it makes sense that our electoral boundaries need to change, too. I've lived and have been raising my family in Edmonton-Castle Downs for more than 20 years, and I, too, have seen a lot of change in our community. It's a community that really embraces diversity and new Canadians. People really come together to support each other in Castle Downs. We have wonderful established neighbourhoods with a strong sense of identity and new communities being built with all sorts of potential.

I understand what the commission had to deal with in terms of balancing population, but what I'd like to suggest, if it's okay, is that the changes that are proposed don't give a big benefit to the voters or families in this riding. I agree with the commissioners' goal of trying to keep the variance between seats to a minimum and to factor in growth in the immediate future. But I believe that in north Edmonton in general we as MLAs can continue to effectively serve the people in our communities even if the population is a bit above the average. A variance of even 10 per cent does not represent an undue burden on an MLA, particularly in an urban seat. It also does not significantly alter the relative weight of a vote as compared to one in a seat with 10 per cent under the variance. Keeping communities of interest intact and ensuring effective representation should trump having a constituency be a few percentage points higher than the average seat.

Grouping random neighbourhoods, as has been proposed with the moving of Calder and Athlone to West Henday, for example, or adding Killarney to Highlands or removing Carlisle and Caernarvon from Edmonton-Castle Downs seems to be going a bit too far in the interest of balancing a few thousand constituents. Baturyn, Lorelei, Beaumaris, Dunluce, Carlisle, and Caernarvon are all traditional communities that have been in Edmonton-Castle Downs for quite some time.

**The Chair:** Could you go through that list again? Lorelei . . .

**Ms Goehring:** Lorelei, Beaumaris, Dunluce, Baturyn, Carlisle, and Caernarvon.

**The Chair:** Okay. Our proposal would move those out of Edmonton-Castle Downs, and you want them back.

**Ms Goehring:** Correct.

**The Chair:** Where are they under the proposed redistricting?

**Ms Goehring:** They would be under the newly named riding, previously Edmonton-Calder. I think it's Edmonton-North West in the proposal.

**The Chair:** How many people live in those neighbourhoods?

**Ms Goehring:** I don't have those numbers in front of me. I'm sorry. The proposal would be to maintain the boundaries as they currently sit, at 11 per cent over.

**The Chair:** It would basically return your riding to the way it is right now.

**Ms Goehring:** Correct.

**The Chair:** And that would leave Edmonton-West Henday about 32 per cent under. How would we solve that problem?

**Ms Goehring:** Edmonton-West Henday: what was it formerly?

**The Chair:** Well, it was Edmonton-Meadowlark. A redistribution throughout. I mean, it depends on what part you're wanting. The southern part was Edmonton-Meadowlark; part of the northern part was Edmonton-Calder at the moment. My point is that when you add population back, you've got to take it out of somewhere else. That suggestion would leave Edmonton-West Henday below 25 per cent under, which we cannot do.

**Mr. Wilting:** That community and that area is a high-growth area. By the time of not this election but the next election I do not believe that will be anywhere close to that number.

**The Chair:** We still can't go below 25 per cent.

**Mr. Wilting:** I mean, our riding as it currently exists and has existed for a long time this way is a functioning community. Taking these people out that have no connections with the schools, where our MLA does most of her work with the school communities and stuff, would result in these people getting not better service but worse service.

**The Chair:** Still, we cannot go below 25 per cent of the provincial average – that's the maximum – and we'd have to be convinced that there was a good reason to even go that far. Keeping the status quo in and of itself – there has to be more to it.

I'm sorry. I misspoke when I said Edmonton-West Henday; I meant the new riding name of Edmonton-North West.

**1:45**

I haven't heard reasons why the constituents who live in Lorelei, Beaumaris, et cetera, would be more effectively represented by their MLA if they remained in Edmonton-Castle Downs rather than being put into Edmonton-North West. Do you want to take a run at that?

**Ms Goehring:** Yeah. So having those communities stay intact: they are natural communities that have been together for quite some time. The creation of Edmonton-Castle Downs started with those communities that I identified. They are all also named after famous castles; hence, the name Castle Downs. So they've always been part of Edmonton-Castle Downs. There is a recreation society called the Castle Downs Recreation Society. They serve that community as well. That's part of them. They also serve two additional communities that aren't part of the borders in Edmonton-Castle Downs as it stands.

I would like to say that I think my neighbouring colleagues would also agree that we would rather see our communities being able to

stay intact as opposed to removing them from what has traditionally been part of their community. I think it's particularly important given that effective representation and common community interests are mandated considerations of the commission and ones which it has obviously tried to recognize whenever possible whereas accounting for future growth is a new initiative of the commission.

In summary, I believe that the current boundaries as they exist meet the needs of the constituents and are some of the most straightforward in the province, following natural boundaries and keeping communities grouped together for the most part. I would urge the commission to reconsider its proposed changes and look at a scenario with fewer changes than what has been proposed, changes that recognize the natural boundaries and the natural communities that exist in north Edmonton.

Thank you for letting me present.

**The Chair:** Thank you.  
Any questions?

**Ms Munn:** I just wanted to clarify that we're talking about all of those communities south of 153rd between 113th and . . .

**Ms Goehring:** And 127th.

**Ms Munn:** And 127th?

**Ms Goehring:** Correct. In the boundary report they were identified as Griesbach, I believe, but they are Carlisle and Caernarvon.

**Ms Munn:** So Caernarvon and Carlisle: are those the only two that are really important to you?

**Ms Goehring:** Those are the two that are removed that were traditionally Castle Downs communities.

**The Chair:** These other areas are still in Edmonton-Castle Downs?

**Ms Goehring:** I'm proposing that they stay exactly . . .

**The Chair:** Okay. What do you want back in Edmonton-Castle Downs?

**Ms Munn:** Caernarvon and Carlisle.

**The Chair:** Just the two?

**Ms Goehring:** Well, those are the two community leagues that they fall under. There are several other communities that fall into that.

**Ms Munn:** And Baranow is . . .

**Ms Goehring:** It's part of Carlisle. They have the two community leagues.

**Ms Munn:** So right over to 127th Street?

**Ms Goehring:** Yeah. Just maintaining the boundaries exactly as they are today. [interjections]

**Ms Munn:** Now I see what part you're talking about. Do you have any idea what the population of that little block is? [interjections]

**Ms Goehring:** I don't.

**Ms Munn:** Okay.

**The Chair:** *Hansard* cannot deal with this. We're talking over one another, and people are coming up without identifying themselves, et cetera.

Just to summarize, what we have now learned is that our issue here is in fact the communities of Carlisle and Caernarvon. You suggest that they should be returned to Edmonton-Castle Downs from Edmonton-North West?

**Ms Goehring:** Correct.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

**Ms Goehring:** I also have a map. If you'd like, I could table that as well.

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Ms Goehring:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** All right. Our next registered speaker is Al Kemmere.

**Mr. Kemmere:** Well, thank you, Madam Chair, and commission members. Thank you for allowing us to come and present on behalf of AAMD and C, or the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. I feel rather alone in the room right now because I am representing rural municipalities in the heart of the city, so hopefully you can bear with me on that.

For your information and *Hansard's* information AAMD and C represents all of the rural municipalities in Alberta, the counties and MDs. That's 64 municipal districts and counties and five specialized municipalities. We cover about 18 per cent of Alberta's population but 85 per cent of the land base that this province covers from a municipal point of view. So our submission is going to be at a much higher level. I am a resident of the Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills riding, so I'm halfway between Red Deer and Calgary, and I can make comments on the modifications on that if the commission wishes later. But my comments are going to be more provincial in nature, so I'll just clarify that.

The commission is tasked with a rather interesting challenge because you're hearing submissions and recommendations on the fly. I don't know how you're going to consolidate all that, but my credit goes to you for trying to do so. One of our common threads that we try to identify in this and the comments that have even come from you, Madam Chair, is the role of effective representation. I think that's an interesting comment because we will all look at it from different aspects. But from our association's point of view effective representation depends on population but also community characteristics – community identity is an important one – and then geography. Geography is one of the challenges that we see in the report coming forward. Effective representation means the ability to have your voice heard and understood by provincially elected officials.

The interim report makes several significant changes that will have an adverse impact on many rural municipalities and rural residents. Most impactful are the changes to the boundaries that will remove three seats from Alberta's rural areas into more urban areas. AAMD and C fears that the representation of rural residents will be much more difficult and not as effective as what we are accustomed to.

In rural Alberta effective representation means that constituents and their elected officials must be able to meet and discuss issues of joint concern. We believe that our residents should have as close to equal access as possible to their MLAs, but we also believe our MLAs need to have as easy access as possible to their communities, to visit with their communities. As an elected official myself I can only echo the fact that as elected representatives we need to be in touch with the people. That's one of the challenges that I have in my own county, and it is an ongoing challenge the larger the distribution is.

In rural Alberta effective representation means that constituents do have their access. It also means that MLAs are able to connect as easily as possible, and that's where we see a significant difference. It is most important to have a general sense of important aspects of community and to some degree have shared experiences with their constituents.

When it comes to recommendations, we have a few positions. In your reflection of your interim report and our reflection of it we're hoping that there can be more consideration to the geographic differences and distances that are affected to reflect population densities. Rural constituencies are large by nature, but removing three of these traditional rural seats, as the interim report suggests, only makes our challenges larger. MLAs can have a tough time reaching their constituents when the electoral boundaries are extended for hundreds of kilometres.

Rural broadband continues to be a challenge in our rural communities. While I know that the report does identify the opportunity to use modern technology to connect, our number one challenge is that the more remote we get, the larger the constituency, the poorer the service is. That is a challenge that I know this commission cannot solve, but it is something that needs to be reflected on, we believe. All technological opportunities are a challenge when we get to rural, remote Alberta.

In our initial submission we suggested that blended ridings can have a strong aspect in this, and we still believe that. Our request is that when we do have blended urban-rural ridings, as much as possible we balance the population of urban and rural in those blended ridings so that an MLA can have a good, equal response from their constituents and represent them on an equal basis.

AAMD and C would like to reiterate that dividing municipalities, particularly geographically large rural municipalities, into multiple electoral divisions can create unnecessarily complex governance arrangements when it comes to both municipally and provincially elected officials working together and working collaboratively.

Protecting core community interests is important. The commission's comments in the interim report regarding common community interests do acknowledge that there is a need for consideration in the determination of electoral boundaries. Although the commission's interim report states that most current electoral divisions outside of Edmonton and Calgary do not contain a single common community, it is fair to say that creating geographically larger ridings in already diverse electoral constituencies only moves them further away from the recognition of common community characteristics. The expansion of electoral boundaries that are already large more often than not is at odds with the preservation of community interests.

1:55

To conclude the points above, AAMD and C would like to reiterate that much of what the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission must address is a means to an end, and the core outcome, the end goal for the Alberta Legislative Assembly, is to have the ability to effectively represent Albertans in all walks of life. The process or means of representation by balancing population and demographics, community interests and characteristics, and existing and natural boundaries are all other relevant factors. Overreliance on absolute voter parity assumes that all Albertans have similar access to their elected officials, which in a large riding is not always the case. Focusing on absolute parity may not achieve the desired outcome and may inhibit the ability for Albertans to effectively be represented, effectively weakening Alberta's democratic institutions.

Thank you. I'd be willing to answer any questions you would have.

**The Chair:** Sure. I'll just start with an editorial comment. In fact, we're only suggesting amalgamations of two ridings outside of Edmonton and Calgary to add seats to Edmonton and Calgary. The third is moving a riding from the southeast rain shadow of Calgary to the northwest rain shadow of Calgary. That still is a rural riding if you define rural as everything outside of Edmonton and Calgary, which we don't, but obviously some people are used to that division.

**Mr. Kemmere:** Fair enough.

**The Chair:** You offered to give us some input on Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills. We haven't recommended any changes to the boundaries of that constituency. Are you seeking any changes?

**Mr. Kemmere:** Well, if I recall the map, in the Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills riding, in the northeast corner of what we call now in the recommendations the Banff-Stoney riding, there is a jut out into what we would commonly know as the Bergen community.

**The Chair:** What community is that?

**Mr. Kemmere:** Bergen. It won't show up on your map because it is a rural community without defined boundaries, but it is that notch on the top of that riding that separates that corner, those people from the community that they best assimilate with. By moving them into the Banff-Stoney riding, it takes them from about a one-hour drive at tops to their constituency office to a two-and-a-half-hour drive across because they'd almost have to go back to Calgary to get to the Banff-Stoney riding. So that would be one.

Another example I will share – and this comes from one of our own board members – is that the county of Leduc, the south border of the city of Edmonton, not a large county by any means, is divided into seven different ridings, and it's got notches from different ridings reaching into it. I'm sharing this on behalf of their mayor, who will be making a presentation to you at another event. In his words, dividing a county that size into seven different ridings is going to be beyond challenging as far as representation goes.

**The Chair:** Again, we're not recommending any changes to that riding other than the deletion of land, which is the space between the southern border of the city of Edmonton and the northern border of Beaumont or vice versa. Otherwise, it remains as is.

**Mr. Kemmere:** Well, on the map that he shared with me, the lines that were taken presently were showing the annexation lands that were submitted by the city of Edmonton at one point, which are no longer annexed.

**The Chair:** Right. That takes land out of his constituency. I appreciate that there's an argument as to whether we were correct in doing that or not, but that doesn't increase the size of Leduc-Beaumont, so that cannot mean that it crosses more constituencies. I'm not following the argument.

**Mr. Kemmere:** It goes more to the splitting of a community than anything.

**The Chair:** And what is the community?

**Mr. Kemmere:** The county of Leduc.

**The Chair:** Okay. But that's split up now that way, so recommending the status quo is just continuing what's already there.

**Mr. Kemmere:** Okay. Then I will not address that one any further because I cannot defend the argument likewise.

**The Chair:** I mean, it may be a good point, but it's just a fact that it is that way.

**Mr. Kemmere:** Fair enough.

Our challenge still becomes the size of many of the ridings that we are looking at and the strong focus on voter parity, just counting the numbers of voters.

**The Chair:** Okay. What's the population of Bergen, or that area that would have to move into Banff-Stoney?

**Mr. Kemmere:** It would only be about 200 people, so it wouldn't affect those percentages significantly on either one of the ridings. Both are fairly close in their percentages.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thanks very much.

All right. Mrs. Day, any comments?

**Mrs. Day:** I have a couple of questions. We had talked about the Bergen-Bottrel area already. We've heard from a number of communities. I guess that from my perspective as a past county councillor I look at counties as communities, much like people in the city look at their neighbourhoods as communities. You just heard this morning about very strong connections to communities and history and love for the community. Do you see counties as communities? When we talk in our guidelines in the act about communities of interest, do you see that as well?

**Mr. Kemmere:** Well, definitely. Counties are a group of common communities created in one community. That is one of the challenges that we see in this. As we create larger ridings, we are forcing more communities together, or we are fragmenting communities at times. Recognizing that there is no easy answer to some of the dispersed population situations, making that situation worse is where our concern is. The status quo would be much more favourable to us than to lose those two ridings and make the other ridings much larger.

**Mrs. Day:** Okay. One more question. We've gone around this a few times and discussed it and seen it at hearings. When people's communities are now separated and they end up with two MLAs rather than one representing them – we were out at Vermilion yesterday – some people see that as getting half an MLA now instead of having two voices in the Leg. But some people see it as if you're adding another voice for your community in the Leg. Where do you stand on that in regard to a community that had just one representative now having two or three?

**Mr. Kemmere:** I'll use my own county as an example. Mountain View county is split by the Red Deer River, so everybody west of Sundre goes north. That's a natural divide. As much as it is the dividing of a community, it's a reality that we do have. But having two MLAs represent yourself is not always a bad situation from a municipality's point of view. I realize there are challenges to this process. It still comes down to having – if you've got two MLAs relatively close to your area, you have two voices you can go to. That is probably one of our challenges. When I look at our situation, when you look at the map and some of those large ridings, our people have significant challenges getting in touch or getting through to their MLAs. It's no fault of the MLAs; it's just the geography. Yet when I look at an urban centre, you're often 20 minutes to half an hour from your MLA if you're walking. You also have access to all the other MLAs that are within a half hour's drive

of you, too, which can be multiples, whereas we do not have those opportunities in rural communities. You have the single MLA that often is four hours away in many cases, and for yourself to get in contact with that MLA is a huge challenge.

Then, you know, the other part is for that MLA to be present in their communities. If they live in an urban centre, an MLA effectively can attend numerous functions within a day, within an evening, whereas in a rural situation, in some of these large ridings, it takes you a whole weekend to make a single visit. It's about people being able to have their voice.

I know we talk about the numbers, and I understand the framework around the numbers that needs to be held in. My only comment on the numbers is that the numbers should be hard and fast only if we can guarantee 100 per cent voter turnout. That's the challenge we're all facing. The numbers are good, but if we can guarantee 100 per cent voter turnout, then the numbers are really, really important. But the lower the voter turnout we get, the less important the numbers and the more important the communities, the geographic opportunities, and the cultures of the ridings are. That's my extra comment to that.

**The Chair:** Thanks.

**Mrs. Day:** Just one more. I like where you're going with that as well, but I looked at the federal ridings. I found it interesting and thought perhaps it could be a consideration and perhaps it would help people understand the vastness of our areas in Alberta in that they list population, then beside that electorates, which are two different numbers. We're mandated to work with the Canada census population, which is not the number of voters – and we know that – nor is it the number of people that show up to vote. That's a whole other number. But if you look at that, beside those two columns then they put square kilometres. One MP in Labrador, for example, or P.E.I. represents around 20,000 people, and then they mention the square kilometres. When you compare that, Alberta's MPs are representing about 110,000 per riding.

If we did that in the Alberta ridings, we listed the square kilometres that this area is now representing, for example in the Lesser Slave Lake area the numbers are low and you're in the special riding and then the number of square kilometres beside that – it's just a thought – it would help people to wrap their heads around: "Okay. It's not just a number. We're talking about space and land and geography and communities." Oh, I kind of gave a speech on that. But anyway, I really wanted to know what you thought of that idea.

2:05

**Mr. Kemmere:** Yeah. I think any time you can clarify the information, it's going to make it that much better a report. Various comparisons, I think, can only make the report stronger. It helps to defend, but it also helps for criticism to come along, too. More information is better than a lack thereof, so I think that would be good.

I guess the only other part I'll share is that Alberta is the only province in Canada that's got municipal boundaries north to south, east to west touching all those borders, being counties and MDs, so we do have a footprint on the land that we're hoping is not going to be divided up any more than it has to be or weakened in our representation.

**Mr. McLeod:** Just one question. You talked about Bergen and Bottrel. We were using highway 22 and the Mountain View county lines to kind of do a separation for township road 310 and range road 290. Can you give me some natural boundaries so that we can include those two or exclude those two?

**Mr. Kemmere:** Presently I can't give you the road numbers, but if you look at the Banff-Stoney riding, you'll see that big notch going up into the northeast. If you were to take that riding boundary that sits horizontal and draw it straight across – I believe that's 310 – I think that would be natural, and that would allow those people to be in the riding where their home is. It would be an easy configuration, and it wouldn't change the percentages that significantly.

**Mr. McLeod:** I just want to make sure I understand where you're coming from. If we sort of went that way and then included from highway 22 and, like you say, take that notch either one way or the other, then it would split up Mountain View county again.

**Mr. Kemmere:** Which you're doing presently.

**Mr. McLeod:** Yeah. Okay. We really, honestly, tried to respect that because in your first presentation, when you presented to us earlier in the year, you said: try not to do that. We actually took that into consideration when we were looking at stuff.

**Mr. Kemmere:** To be fair to the commission, my job is not to come here and look after my municipality. I've got a reeve that'll look after that. My job is to represent all the municipal positions.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms Livingstone.

**Ms Livingstone:** Yeah. I just had one question. This is something I asked one of the people from another organization last night, an organization that happens to have, as far as I can tell, diametrically opposed views to yours. Has your organization taken the time to create a map that complies with the legislation as an alternative for us to consider?

**Mr. Kemmere:** We have not gone through to create a map. I've seen about five different maps from different groups that have got all different alternatives. That's why we've decided to focus on the principle of effective representation and not such a hard line on what you're referring to as voter parity, allowing more flexibility that way. No, we haven't created – I've seen so many different maps. I'm not sure which one we would be picking now. That's why I don't envy the position you're in, but thank you for doing the work that you do.

**The Chair:** Thanks so much.

Okay. We'll take one more speaker, and then we'll have a five-minute break. Jon Carson.

**Mr. Carson:** Good afternoon. Thank you very much for allowing me the opportunity to be here today. First of all, my name is Jon Carson. I'm the MLA for what is known currently as Edmonton-Meadowlark. I'm a resident of the Secord community in Edmonton-Meadowlark. I appreciate the work that you have undertaken so far and the complexity and believe that overall throughout the province you have struck a good balance. I once again appreciate what you're doing.

Today I would like to propose an alternative to what the commission has put forward that I believe will better serve my community as a whole. My comments will address the large geographical area that has been proposed compared to other Edmonton communities, the natural boundaries within the communities that have been utilized, and finding a way forward that will have as little an impact as possible on neighbouring communities.

Simply put, I believe the boundaries for the new Edmonton-West Henday constituency should remain closer to what is currently the Edmonton-Meadowlark boundaries. The boundaries of the Edmonton-Meadowlark constituency as set out by the previous boundary review, in my opinion, have served the community well. Communities north of the Whitemud Drive naturally are more collaborative with other communities north of the Whitemud, and I believe it makes most sense to leave these as the new Edmonton-West Henday constituency's southernmost boundaries from east to west. This would mean the new constituency would keep the communities of Summerlea, Thorncliff, and Aldergrove, which your commission has proposed moving to Edmonton-McClung, south of the Whitemud.

This addition of population would be offset by my recommendations to not add the communities of Athlone and Calder to the northeast border of the constituency and instead leave the boundaries as they were previously or are currently. The communities of Athlone and Calder would be better served by keeping them with neighbouring communities and have very little commonalities with the rest of the new Edmonton-West Henday constituency as they are completely separated from all neighbourhoods to the west by industrial and commercial properties as well as major transportation corridors. This makes it more confusing for communities to know who their representative is and can also lead to issues where constituents who rely on public transit have issues getting to the constituency office. As well, the community needs of Athlone and Calder are completely different than, say, a community in my southwest border like Rosenthal or Lewis Estates or even more central like La Perle or Belmead.

Once again, I do believe that the new Edmonton-West Henday constituency would be best served by staying as close to the current constituency of Edmonton-Meadowlark as possible. Crossing the Yellowhead to take those communities out of what would then be known as Edmonton-North West, currently Edmonton-Calder, doesn't necessarily make a whole lot of sense in my opinion, and I don't think that would lead to the best outcomes for community collaboration. I hope that you might consider keeping the Yellowhead Trail as the constituency's entire northern border as well, so Whitemud, south, and Yellowhead, north, bordering east to west.

**The Chair:** What's the population that we proposed to add to Edmonton-West Henday that's north of the Yellowhead? Do you have the figures for Athlone and Calder?

**Mr. Carson:** I don't have them in front of me. I have looked at them. They are quite common, I believe, to what is being given to Edmonton-McClung, so you're going to have to take a look at that.

**The Chair:** Okay. Anything else?

**Mr. Carson:** I just, finally, once again, would like to thank all of you. Though it will change my variance, I believe adding more people to my constituency, I believe that the natural boundaries that are currently in place for Edmonton-Meadowlark are satisfactory and help to create that community cohesion. So I would, once again, hope that you keep it that way.

Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** All right. Thank you.

Ms Munn, any questions?

**Ms Munn:** I don't have any questions.

**The Chair:** Ms Livingstone? Mr. McLeod?

**Mr. McLeod:** Putting the additions that you're suggesting aside for a second, I'm looking at Edmonton-West Henday. We're looking at leaving – our recommendation is minus 8 per cent. I think part of the resolve is, as I recall on that one, the potential growth. Is there still that potential growth within that area?

**Mr. Carson:** Within the west, of course. Like I said, I live in Secord, and houses are going up daily. Rosenthal is the exact same in the southwest part of the constituency. That is where there is a conversation to be had about the three communities north of there – Hawks Ridge, Starling, and Trumpeter – and where those might fit in. I will be tabling a document, a map, the exact same map as other presenters have put forward from our caucus, that leaves that in Edmonton-North West. That's a conversation that will have to continue because that growth will be, I'm sure, just as fast as the growth in the other two communities. That's a consideration that you will have to undertake.

**The Chair:** Do you have that map with you?

**Mr. Carson:** I do. Yes.

**The Chair:** Could we see it?

**Mr. Carson:** Yes, of course. Thank you.

**The Chair:** All right. Looking at this, the minus 12 per cent is what you say this would leave Edmonton-West Henday at, and it would make St. Albert plus 15 per cent. I know numbers aren't everything, but you've got them here, so I just want to make sure I'm getting these neighbourhoods right. The 4 per cent is your calculation for Edmonton-North West.

**Mr. Carson:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Edmonton-Castle Downs would be at 11 per cent, Edmonton-Decore at 15 per cent.

2:15

**Mr. Carson:** Those are conversations that we have had within caucus to ensure that we can do our best to keep neighbourhoods together.

One thing that you will notice in there that I did not mention in my presentation is that I have put an opportunity or an option to make our most eastern border 170th instead of what – I don't have your presentation in front of me – currently has a funny wiggle. It's 163rd Street and goes over to 156th. Really, I have to put on the record that it pains me to have to consider that because I have some incredible constituents in that community, including my family and my parents, which is losing me votes, I suppose. But at the end of the day we have to try and do what's best for keeping communities together, and I believe that 170th is potentially a good natural boundary for our eastern side of the constituency.

**The Chair:** Mrs. Day, any questions?

**Mrs. Day:** I have to ask this question. In reviewing a lot of the submissions, 700 or whatever they were, 750, from the first time around and 500 and some now, a large number came from city of Edmonton people saying: whatever else you do, voter parity. Like, that's it. A one-liner. I'm curious. I'm hearing from the communities here that communities of interest are, again, weighing over this voter parity ideal. For yourself and your caucus you've worked out different numbers, and you believe that you can still offer effective representation if your number is higher than the norm, over that parity, that 46,000 number.

**Mr. Carson:** Yes. I can tell you from experience that I consider the urban ridings very lucky. I mean, I've had the opportunity to door-knock about 40 per cent of my community, which is unheard of for a rural community. I believe that even with the numbers proposed, we will all still be able to effectively represent our communities, no doubt about it.

**Mrs. Day:** Good to hear.

The second question is: has anybody in the neighbourhood associations or anybody in Edmonton come up with an alternate map in total of the city of Edmonton's 19, let's say 20, ridings? Did anybody work on a completion of the Edmonton ridings?

**Mr. Carson:** I wouldn't be able to give you that. I don't know. I haven't heard of anything from my local community leagues, but I could be wrong.

**Mrs. Day:** We've had a lot of representation from different areas these last couple of days, not all of them, obviously.

Well, thank you for your work. You can see the complexity when you work on a small area.

**Mr. Carson:** Of course.

**Mrs. Day:** It's like dominoes, right?  
Thank you.

**Mr. McLeod:** If I may, just so I'm clear, when I look at this map and some of the percentages in here, when you look at Edmonton-Decore at plus 15, then you're potentially saying to me or to this commission that you don't believe there's going to be any more growth in that area.

**Mr. Carson:** That would definitely be a question to ask to the representative or communities within Decore. I wouldn't have that answer for you.

**Mr. McLeod:** In part of our deliberations we took that into consideration. For example, in Calgary-South East there are 91,000 people there. We had to do something there, but then we also looked at the real southeast corner of Calgary, where construction is going on like you wouldn't believe. We had to leave it in kind of a situation where there is that growth, and within eight years it'll probably be plus something instead of minus.

**Mr. Carson:** Yes, which is exactly what we'll see in Edmonton-West Henday, I'm sure.

**Mr. McLeod:** Yes. That's why I'm asking the question.  
Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thanks so much.

**Mr. Carson:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** We'll take five minutes at this point. Thanks, ladies and gentlemen.

[The hearing adjourned from 2:19 p.m. to 2:29 p.m.]

**The Chair:** All right, ladies and gentlemen. I think we'll get started again.

Sheila Aitken is our first registered speaker. Is Ms Aitken here?

**Ms Aitken:** Yes, I am.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

All right. Thank you, everybody. We're going to start again now.

Ms Aitken.

**Ms Aitken:** Thank you. Thank you for the chance to speak today. I'm here today on behalf of the Stony Plain constituency association. Our association has gone through the commission's interim report and would like to share some feedback on the proposed changes to the region of the province. It appears that the commission has taken a considered and measured approach to its work and has thought carefully about which consideration should take precedence and how they can be mapped to the greatest effect in most cases with the least disruption.

The proposal for Stony Plain creates some significant changes in this area necessitated by the population growth which has occurred in the last decade. We cannot argue with the need for changes to be made, but I hope that we can offer some insight into the impact of the proposed changes in our region. Stony Plain has a long history tied to the communities in Parkland county along the railway and highway corridors. The tradition continues, with trade and services gravitating toward Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, and Edmonton itself. Under the proposal, though, Stony Plain is grouped with the communities along highway 43, which it has less of a relationship with. Parkland county, likewise, has much less in common with neighbours south of the river in Leduc county or with Devon, with only a few places to cross the North Saskatchewan in the proposed seat.

There is also a rich indigenous heritage in the area, as the commissioner has noted, but under the proposed boundaries the four major First Nations in the area are divided between three different seats. The two urban areas of Spruce Grove and Stony Plain, the First Nations, two counties, and the highway 16 and 43 corridors follow the same general lines radiating away from Edmonton. All three of the proposed seats in the area and Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock to the north are under the average population for the province. The seats surrounding them to the west and southeast around Edmonton are overpopulated. It would seem to us that there is some room to make changes to this proposed map in order to better reflect the shared communities of interest while still maintaining the commission's priority of balancing population.

From the perspective of the constituency office increased population would not mean a negative impact on the ability to effectively represent the constituents.

**The Chair:** I take it you're in the New Democratic constituency office.

**Ms Aitken:** Pardon?

**The Chair:** Which party? So that we all know.

**Ms Aitken:** Yes. We're the Stony Plain constituency association.

Being able to serve them effectively, though, does not require that the boundaries provide us with some cohesion for the communities in the seat, with their shared and unique interests. I think that the commission is on the right path in the work that you've started here, and I can see how we would be able to continue to serve the constituents well in the proposed seats. But we also think that there are some other options for configuring the regions that possibly were overlooked that will still meet more of your objectives and considerations. I hope the input provided in this round of consultation is taken to heart and duly considered by you all.

I know you're going to ask questions.

**The Chair:** Okay. Do you have maps of these options?



**Ms Aitken:** I do not have a map because it's pretty simple, looking at the configurations, to have Stony Plain and Spruce Grove be one riding.

**The Chair:** The population would be way over the maximum limit.

**Ms Aitken:** We looked into that because that actually did come up as well. The existing population right now in Spruce Grove is 34,000, and Stony Plain is 17,000. Different sites call it around 46,000, so we still come into that percentage that you were looking for.

**The Chair:** Stony Plain is 17,000, you say?

**Ms Aitken:** Yes. Stony Plain is 17,189, and Spruce Grove is 34,066. Now, we googled it as an association because we got three or four answers. One site said their combined was 51,000, and another site said the combined was 48,000, but we felt that it came into the parameters. Given that you did mention Spruce Grove and Stony Plain earlier and given the fact that these two communities are part of the tri region municipality, it's a difficult split.

**The Chair:** This would mean that we would have to find another home for the rest of the Spruce Grove constituency that we propose in our report here. So looking at the map of Spruce Grove here, we've got Spruce Grove itself down in the corner, and we've got all of this territory. Where do you suggest we add the population in that territory, which according to your figures would be about 14,000 people?

**Ms Aitken:** Go to the south or to the east. When we did this as an association, we had many, multiple people coming in and presenting to us what they would like. But given the population split you are absolutely right. It's got to be a hard decision for the board as well, because . . .

2:35

**The Chair:** Okay. If I can interrupt, you say to the east, so we should add it to St. Albert.

**Ms Aitken:** Yes.

**The Chair:** You're suggesting we go back to the blended riding in St. Albert as it currently exists.

**Ms Aitken:** Yes, without Spruce Grove. I believe that it's Spruce Grove-St. Albert, is it not?

**The Chair:** No. To be enough, we'd have to have Spruce Grove in there as well. There aren't that many people in the acreages. Well, there are 14,000 people, but that's not going to be enough to make up for the loss of Spruce Grove in that blended riding. Right now, currently, Spruce Grove-Stony Plain is right at par, so if we took out 34,000 people, obviously it's not going to be right at par, and if we add 17,000 people in what I'm calling the remainder bit of St. Albert, then you're still up to only about 34,000 people in that riding.

I mean, we considered these things. I'm only saying that to show you that we worked the numbers all around. Spruce Grove is one of the challenging children here because it's growing so fast and has so many people. But just assuming that we're right and that doesn't work, you said the other solution lies south?

**Ms Aitken:** It would be to the south.

**The Chair:** All right. Looking at the south of Stony Plain, you want to be part of Devon-Parkland? It would put them into Devon-Parkland . . .

**Ms Aitken:** Yes.

**The Chair:** . . . which is 2 per cent below, so we would have to move people out of Devon-Parkland. But, as you've said, the communities to the west of those are well above the maximum, close in the case of Rocky Mountain House. Where would we put that population?

**Ms Aitken:** I have no idea.

**The Chair:** Pardon me?

**Ms Aitken:** I have no idea.

**The Chair:** Okay. You know, you get the prize for honesty.

**Ms Aitken:** You know, I just can't imagine even sitting on this board because it would be so challenging, but I do know that . . .

**The Chair:** Let me ask the core question. I've lived in Edmonton all of my life. I'm familiar with both Stony Plain and Spruce Grove. I have family living in Spruce Grove. I've been out there lots. Why is it better to have them in the same riding when they haven't been in the same riding for a while, at least? Why will that help the MLA more effectively represent the constituents than if they're in two separate ridings on their own? Why is one MLA more effective than two MLAs?

**Ms Aitken:** Because it would be one urban as opposed to the split that it is now, having one MLA for two and the fact that Spruce Grove and Stony are so connected. They are connected with people. The communities are so close together, as you know if you've been out there. They're, you know, within three minutes of each other. There's a lot of co-operation between Stony Plain and Spruce Grove. It would be really convenient, actually, for everyone if we were just one urban.

**The Chair:** Okay. All right. Thanks. Just don't move yet.

**Mrs. Day:** I did have a quick question. You quickly went over that the indigenous groups are divided between I believe you said three different ridings. Do you picture them being able to fit within what you're suggesting is back to Spruce Grove-Stony Plain, all within one riding, then?

**Ms Aitken:** Yeah. That would be really nice. It would be nice if we could hold on to the indigenous, have them under one as well. Right now the constituency represents all three indigenous bands, so Alexis, Paul band, and Enoch. The MLA works very closely with all three bands as well. That would probably take us above. I know that there are 3,000 in Enoch alone, so we are now talking above your limit of the percentage that you would want. But the way the map is right now, it's going to divide the indigenous communities all the way around.

**The Chair:** How are those three indigenous communities that are currently located in Stony Plain riding divided by our new proposal?

**Ms Aitken:** Well, just by looking at the boundaries and where they fall, because you're looking at going from south to north . . .

**The Chair:** What band do we move out of Stony?

**Ms Aitken:** Well, Enoch would put us over. You'd probably have to move Enoch out of Stony. I know the other bands are quite small in relation to Enoch.

**The Chair:** Okay. Have we moved Enoch out of Stony with our proposal? Can you tell by looking at the map?

**Ms Aitken:** I can't tell by looking at the map. We're really not a hundred per cent sure if you kept Enoch there or if you put Enoch in St. Albert. I know that the way the boundary is now, Stony Plain constituency does have Enoch.

**The Chair:** Okay. Right now, under our proposal, Enoch would move into Spruce Grove, but you would keep Birch Lake. What's the other band you're talking about? Have you got Alexander band?

**Ms Aitken:** Yes. We have Alexis.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Anything else? Sorry. I haven't asked this side of the table. Any comments?

**Ms Munn:** I don't have any questions.

**Ms Livingstone:** I guess I just have one question. If we were to make that a very urban riding of Stony Plain-Spruce Grove, it would have the impact of making the rural ridings that would have to be assembled without those population centres that much larger. That's one of the main pieces of feedback we've heard, that rural ridings are already too large. Is that a fair trade-off, in your mind, that a rural riding is going to have to be that much larger to put two different urban centres together?

**Ms Aitken:** Personally, to our association, yes. When you talk rural, you're talking land mass as opposed to population, correct? In the land mass as it stands right now, the Stony Plain, it's an hour and five minutes. With the proposed changes of doing Parkland county, Devon, all the way down to Pigeon Lake, I think, in the proposed boundaries that I saw the map of, you're talking two hours and 15 minutes. No matter how you divvy up your rurals, there's still going to be a huge amount of travel involved from one end to another. So is it a trade-off? I just think because of the flow of Stony, Spruce Grove, Acheson, Edmonton, there's just a natural gravitation more to urban than to rural. As I say, it's a hard decision. I mean, in Parkland county right now, I think, the entire county's population is, like, 88,000. It's huge. So how to divide that up and to do what you're even looking at? Splitting that three ways: that's totally understandable. You would have to if you're trying to keep within the population of your mandate.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Anyone else?  
Okay. Thanks so much.

**Ms Aitken:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** All right. Our next registered presenter is Christina Gray.

**Ms Gray:** Good afternoon. To help communicate some of my ideas, I've prepared a handout.

**The Chair:** Great. Thank you.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you very much to the commission for the opportunity to present to the hearing, and thank you for all the work that you've been doing. It's a huge, huge undertaking. I think some of the principles you've been using to guide your work have been

excellent. There's a lot that I support with the work that you are doing.

Today I'm here just to focus on the Edmonton-Mill Woods area. I have lived in Mill Woods for over 15 years, and I currently represent the Edmonton-Mill Woods riding as it stands today. Just to frame Mill Woods, a southeast portion of Edmonton, in your mind a little bit, it's a bit notorious because it was one of the first areas to move away from a grid-based system, so people will talk about getting lost in the loops and the curves of Mill Woods. It was designed that way. It was done that way deliberately to tie the individual communities together to create that sense of place so that you could move from one community to another easily and have that hub in the middle, which is the Mill Woods Town Centre and the Grey Nuns hospital and some of those features. I mention this, that deliberate kind of whirl of roads and planning, because in your original proposed boundaries you're using 50th Street to kind of subdivide this area of southeast Edmonton.

2:45

I would suggest, just based on my experience with these communities, that a slightly different configuration might work better. What I am suggesting is that with the boundaries as they exist today, one of the main challenges that exists is in the areas of Ridgewood and Knottwood. I'm looking at my suggested changes slide. It's because those two neighbourhoods are essentially cut. In Ridgewood I have two communities, Minchau and Weinlos, and Mill Creek has Bisset. In the case of Knottwood, Mill Woods has the Satoo area, whereas Ellerslie has Ekota and Menisa. Now, going forward, Mill Woods needs to grow, and that's in part because it's an area that's fully developed. There's very little new development because these were areas that were planned, designed, and built in the '70s, '80s, and a few of them in the '90s. There isn't a lot of new growth.

My recommendation. Rather than doing the cut along 50th Street, which essentially flips Ridgewood's two neighbourhoods with two neighbourhoods from Millhurst – that change of two neighbourhoods for two neighbourhoods moves roughly 10,000 constituents from one place to another, and the net change is only about 300 people – from my perspective, I think that there's some value in leaving constituents in the areas that they've been voting in since, in some cases, 2002 or earlier, minimizing that change.

**The Chair:** I want to listen and understand, and I'm not understanding.

**Ms Gray:** Okay.

**The Chair:** We're proposing that we make two Mill Woods ridings because the area in total has a population of just under 100,000 people, obviously too much for one riding.

**Ms Gray:** Absolutely.

**The Chair:** In part we take part of former Edmonton-Mill Creek to do that. Looking at my map of our proposed changes – and we do indeed use 50th Street as a north-south dividing line – what you're suggesting is that we move two neighbourhoods from Mill Woods West into Mill Woods East and vice versa. Is that correct?

**Ms Gray:** No. Let me clarify. I'm suggesting that the entirety of the community of Ridgewood, which is three neighbourhoods – Minchau, Weinlos, and Bisset – remain in what's currently Mill Woods . . .

**The Chair:** West or East?

**Ms Gray:** West.

... that Ekota and Menisa, the two neighbourhoods of Knottwood, remain in what you've termed Mill Woods West, and that Millhurst and Southwood remain in what's currently known as Ellerslie. Those two neighbourhoods have been part of Ellerslie for a significant amount of time as Ridgewood has been a part of Mill Woods.

**The Chair:** Okay. We've put that in Mill Woods West, and you're suggesting that it go into Ellerslie instead.

**Ms Gray:** That's correct.

**The Chair:** So this isn't about Mill Woods East, Mill Woods West; it's about Mill Woods West and Ellerslie.

**Ms Gray:** Mill Woods West, Ellerslie, and it does touch on Mill Woods East as well. I'm adjusting between the three.

In reviewing this, I've talked to community league presidents in the affected communities, and I've talked to the representatives from Ellerslie and Mill Creek so that I didn't surprise anyone that I was making this presentation today.

Ridgewood as a community – the Mill Woods neighbourhood ends at 34th Street, so right now the area that you are calling Mill Woods East is predominantly an area of Edmonton called the Meadows. Everything to the east of 34th Street is the Meadows, and that's made up of a series of neighbourhoods that have all been developed much more recently than Mill Woods, which started in the '70s.

I'm suggesting that that Meadows area with Burnewood makes sense as one contiguous constituency and that Mill Woods continue to incorporate the majority of the neighbourhoods from the original development plan for the city of Edmonton. They would be North Millbourne, Leefield, Lakewood, Knottwood, Woodvale, and Ridgewood, in part because Ridgewood actually has quite a lot in common with Woodvale: the age of the neighbourhood, the services that they use, and what have you. Then because Mill Woods can't encompass the entire, literal Mill Woods space, leave Millhurst and Southwood in the Ellerslie constituency, where they currently reside, to minimize that change and confusion.

One of the challenges we have in this southeast Edmonton area is confusion over who is represented by which representative. I think minimizing the change would help because each of us has done considerable work to reach out to constituents, to talk to people, to let them know who their representative is and how they could connect.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm afraid I'm still struggling with the actual change you're wanting, so I wonder if you could come up and with my famous green marker, here on the maps and in my copy of the report, mark the changes that you recommend between Mill Woods East, Mill Woods West, and Ellerslie. What would you take out of Mill Woods West here?

**Ms Gray:** Mill Woods West would be – this is the area of Millhurst. Remove Millhurst and add the entirety of Ridgewood, which goes along the creek, which is kind of a geographical divider of these communities and comes up to 34th Avenue. This is the area of Minchau, Weinlos, and Bisset.

**The Chair:** And it would be added to Mill Woods West as well?

**Ms Gray:** Correct. So these would be added here.

**The Chair:** That's at page 139.

**Ms Gray:** Millhurst would remain in Ellerslie, where it currently exists.

**The Chair:** This square here goes to Ellerslie, and this comes out of Mill Woods East and goes to you.

**Ms Gray:** Correct.

**The Chair:** Where would we replace this population in Mill Woods East? Where would we make that up?

**Ms Gray:** The Meadows is an area that I've referred to. It's an area within Edmonton that was designed to contain the communities of Larkspur, Wild Rose, Silver Berry, Laurel, Maple, Tamarack, and Aster. I would suggest that that area should be all kept complete. Right now there is a portion of it that's considered Mill Woods East, and there's a portion of it that actually – what's currently known as Gold Bar sneaks up along the side. I don't think that that makes sense, knowing those communities as I do, because we're talking about a lot of new growth in these areas. In fact, they're represented by a single community league. The Meadows and the Summerside community leagues operate in this area. They all use the same services, the Meadows rec centre. I know my Mill Woods area better than the Mill Creek area, but I know that it's a single community.

My recommendation would be to keep this Meadows area with the addition of Burnewood. I think Burnewood is the most modern neighbourhood in Mill Woods because a lot of its development was done in the '90s into the 2000s.

**The Chair:** So you're suggesting moving the Meadows and Burnewood into Mill Woods East from what we're calling Edmonton-East?

**Ms Gray:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Do you know what the population is of the Meadows and Burnewood?

**Ms Gray:** I'm afraid I don't. I brought my population numbers from my Mill Woods pieces. I apologize.

**The Chair:** Do you know, then, the population of the area that you're proposing we move out of Mill Woods West into Ellerslie?

**Ms Gray:** Yes. Millhurst is made up of the communities of Meyokumin and Sakaw. Those two communities together are 7,081.

**The Chair:** Okay. And the population that you're proposing to take in from Edmonton-Mill Woods East here, that you've drawn with the creek as one of the boundaries?

**Ms Gray:** The neighbourhoods of Minchau, Weinlos, and Bisset: together those three neighbourhoods are 10,653 residents based on the federal census. My change increases Mill Woods's size slightly from your interim report but still keeps it under 10 per cent, with the recognition that this is an area where there are no new neighbourhoods being built. It's complete.

2:55

**The Chair:** Okay. Looking at Mill Woods East, poor old Mill Woods East is losing 10,653 people. You may not know exactly the population that they'd make up if we agreed with you to move the Meadows and Burnewood into it, but let's say it's roughly the same number because I'm sure that's the goal you were hoping to achieve. Then that would leave Edmonton-East about 10,000

people under, which would be very close to the maximum 25 per cent under that we're permitted. Where would we find population for Edmonton-East?

**Ms Gray:** I have a map that kind of does some of these adjustments, but I'm not going to be knowledgeable enough to describe every change in it. Can I submit it to you?

**The Chair:** Sure, you could give it to us, but in words just generally where would you go?

**Ms Gray:** Mill Creek becomes the Meadows plus Burnewood. Then Mill Woods East goes out just from the Anthony Henday across to 99th Street and up to the river in portions, essentially putting it very close to the average based on this adjustment.

**The Chair:** You would be expanding Edmonton-East to take in part of Edmonton-Strathcona?

**Ms Gray:** Yes, I believe so. Yes, that's what's happening with this. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. If we take 10,000 people out of Strathcona – I know this is a game, and I'm playing it with you. I don't want to sound surprised, but, I mean, I'm following your suggestions. I can understand the reason for them in regard to Mill Woods, but we've got this ripple effect going on. You're familiar with this corner of the city, south, southeast?

**Ms Gray:** Absolutely.

**The Chair:** Where do we find these extra 10,000 people that we're giving you?

**Ms Gray:** I would suggest, without knowing the numbers in Tamarack, that there are significant communities inside of the Meadows: Tamarack, Maple, and Aster, including a lot of growing communities. Although I may not have the literal numbers for those communities in front of me, I know that by having the Ridgewood community remain within Mill Woods and the Meadows entirely represented together with Burnewood, that change would put what you're referring to as Mill Woods East at or near the population growth without having to impact the others as much now.

You've mentioned Edmonton-East, so what I'll do is provide for you kind of a potential suggested map for how other suggestions, movements might be made to balance each of these out. Then the representatives and other people from these different areas can of course speak to their own individual maps.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you. We'd be grateful to receive that map as an exhibit for your presentation.

**Ms Gray:** Okay. I will pass that on to you.

Then I would suggest that I think Mill Woods East and Mill Woods West could be confusing names, so my suggestion would be they remain as Edmonton-Mill Woods and Edmonton-Mill Creek as the two names for that area. That would be my other thought.

**The Chair:** We thought in our report, as I'm sure you've read because you're from this area, that because the portion of Mill Creek remaining in Mill Woods area is so small, and it's covered – I understand that there's a plan afoot to maybe uncover it, but there's a great chunk of it that's covered. Most Edmontonians don't even realize that there's a bit of Mill Creek left in what is called Edmonton-Mill Woods East in our proposed map. We thought it

would be confusing to call it Edmonton-Mill Creek, that people would think that we were talking about what's part of Edmonton-East, where the open part of Mill Creek is that we're all familiar with. You know, to acknowledge your concern that there would be confusion here, do you have another suggestion for a name of something that's in our proposed Edmonton-Mill Woods East as modified by you that would suggest to Edmontonians where that is in the city?

**Ms Gray:** If Mill Creek is not a favourable suggestion, then my second suggestion would be the Meadows because that is the bulk of that area. It is essentially the Meadows plus Burnewood that become that constituency.

**Ms Munn:** Can I ask you: where is the community of Tamarack?

**Ms Gray:** Absolutely. It is to the east of 17th Street and on the north end of the community. I just have one of these, but I'll pass you my map of the Meadows.

**The Chair:** In the north end of Edmonton-Mill Creek West or Mill Creek East on our proposed map?

**Ms Gray:** Mill Woods East.

**The Chair:** Mill Woods East. Thank you. See, I'm doing it myself.

**Ms Gray:** The Aster neighbourhood is the newest in the Meadows, so development is still booming in that area.

**The Chair:** Of course. All right. Thank you. Very helpful.

Mrs. Day, do you have any questions?

**Mrs. Day:** Yeah. I'm trying to find this on the map. Is Tamarack part of the Meadows?

**Ms Gray:** Yes. I can make that part of my submission. I will also give you this map I've referenced.

**Mrs. Day:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'll just write your name on this.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you very much for following me on this journey. I suppose, just to summarize, I would say that Ridgewood has more in common with the Mill Woods side, that the pieces that are already in Ellerslie I feel should remain in Ellerslie, and that by the addition of the three neighbourhoods of Bisset, Ekota, and Menisa, Mill Woods gains the population that it needs within the overall population growth of the province.

**The Chair:** All right. Anybody have any other questions or comments at all?

**Ms Livingstone:** No. We've finally figured out our problem, where we weren't following people earlier. We had an old map that we were looking at.

**Ms Gray:** Oh, no.

**Ms Livingstone:** Your map has solved a few things that were confusing us all day, so thank you very much.

**Ms Gray:** Oh, you're very welcome.

**The Chair:** Okay. Well, thank you, and may I say that yours is a great illustration of a very helpful presentation. We know what the current is, we know what our proposal is, and you gave us a map

saying, “No; move this, and here’s the reason why” and can then explain what might happen in the other neighbouring constituencies, so that’s terrific. Thanks so much.

**Ms Gray:** I’m happy to help. Yeah. Again, the amount of work that you are undertaking is huge.

As a final note, I’m not sure if I said it, but I was able to attend the Ridgewood AGM, and they expressed to me that Ridgewood does have more in common with the Mill Woods communities versus the newer growth in the Meadows, and they were going to consider doing their own submission. I don’t know if they will have done that or not, but you may find that in your submissions.

**The Chair:** All right. Thanks so much.

Our next presenter, Lorne Dach.

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you, Chair and other commission members. It’s a privilege to be here today and present to you. I do come to you as a long-term resident of Edmonton-McClung. I’ve been there for about 30 years. I sold real estate in the area before being elected in the last election for about 30 years, so I’m quite aware of the community flows and the interactions and networks that are there.

I thought the interim report was a great document. I did read it, and I know that a lot of work went into it. The ripple effect that keeps being mentioned is something that comes to mind when we consider all the things you had to take into account. There are definitely dominoes that fall when you make one decision that affects other ridings surrounding, so it’s a difficult job.

3:05

But my job is to represent the people of Edmonton-McClung, so, with respect, I’m going to put that hat on for a while and raise some concerns about the proposed new boundaries, fairly simple. I’ve been, as I said, politically active in Edmonton-McClung for a long time. I first ran there in 2001. In all that time the Whitemud freeway has been the northern boundary for the riding, and there’s been good reason for that. Historically it’s been that way since Edmonton-McClung’s inception, so the people of the riding are familiar with it. It, of course, follows one of your criteria, which is that it forms a natural transportation barrier, and also it forms an actual barrier in terms of flows of population and really a psychological barrier in terms of people’s minds. I know that when I sold real estate, you’re either north of the freeway or you’re south of the freeway. To have the riding extend to the north is really contrary to the natural flows of what people’s behaviours are, whether it’s being for community or shopping or service purposes. That natural transportation barrier, I think, should be maintained as it is one of your main criteria in determining new boundaries.

Now, one of the elements as part of this change that you propose is that you’ve excised Jamieson Place, which is a neighbourhood to the south. It follows Callingwood Road to the north and 45th Avenue to the south. That neighbourhood of Jamieson Place is really connected to the rest of Edmonton-McClung in that in combination with Ormsby Place it forms a community league called Willowby. Those two neighbourhoods form one community league, and what you’ve done is split the community league in half. I don’t know if you were aware of that, but that shouldn’t happen, in my view. In keeping with your desire to not separate communities of common interest, I think that Jamieson Place should remain in Edmonton-McClung. As a result of what you’re doing, you’re kind of splitting up the community unnecessarily. Those two neighbourhoods, Ormsby and Jamieson Place, form the Willowby Community League.

Mostly, though, I think my biggest rationale for keeping the boundaries more or less like they are is that the constituency seems

to work well as it is. Now the MLA in that riding has to deal with only one councillor. Ward 5 is the one city councillor that the MLA would interact with, and the constituency as it is now and as I propose would have only that one ward 5 to contend with.

Back before the changes in 2010 the Glastonbury and Granville neighbourhoods were part of Edmonton-McClung. To replace the population that would be lost by not having the northern riding boundary extended into the three north neighbourhoods of Summerlea, Aldergrove, and Thorncliff, I propose to go back to the way they were in 2010, to add Glastonbury and Granville on the western side, to the west of the Henday, into the riding of McClung. These are growing neighbourhoods, so they will, particularly in Granville, add to the population over time as we approach the next required review. But even with that there would only be about a minus 3 per cent variation from the average quotient.

Basically, what I’m saying is that we keep the Willowby neighbourhood intact and the community league whole, not go north of the Whitemud, and add Glastonbury and Granville to the west.

To the south there are two neighbourhoods, particularly Cameron Heights, which were natural allies with the Henday ring road. Cameron Heights’ only access into it is off the Henday. Wedgewood: I guess I could say I’m somewhat ambivalent. You never like losing an area that you’ve done work in, but in the concern of ensuring that your criteria are met, I mean, if it must be, then Wedgewood and Cameron Heights, following your proposal, could be excised, still leaving the remaining Jamieson Place, Glastonbury, and Granville additions, a population of about 45,479, which is under by 3 per cent, but also knowing that Granville and Glastonbury are growing communities. By the time we are at the next review period, we’ll probably be slightly over the provincial average.

**The Chair:** Okay. If I can interrupt.

**Mr. Dach:** Of course.

**The Chair:** Do you know the population of the portion of the proposed Edmonton-McClung that lies north of the freeway?

**Mr. Dach:** No, I do not. I’m sorry; I don’t have that number. I do know that the aggregate total in our proposal that I’m presenting today, as I mentioned, would be a population of about 45,479.

**The Chair:** Sure. And what is the population – I bet you know this – of the parts of Jamieson Place that you want back?

**Mr. Dach:** That portion of Jamieson Place is roughly, if I’m not mistaken, about 1,300 homes, so I would say that it’s going to be roughly about 4,000 people, something like that.

**The Chair:** But to calculate that you’ll be at a minus 3 per cent variance, somebody must have known the population you were taking out of your proposed constituency. Otherwise, they couldn’t have done that calculation.

**Mr. Dach:** That’s right, but I don’t have that number right in front of me.

**The Chair:** Somebody had it, but you don’t have it right now.

**Mr. Dach:** Correct. I guess the best that I can say is that the result of our proposal would be that we’d be under by 3 per cent with a population of about 45,479 and that the growth will exist in Granville and Glastonbury primarily to put us at or slightly above the quotient by the time the next review is done.

**The Chair:** Where do you propose that we put the unknown number of population north of the freeway, into Edmonton-West Henday, Edmonton-Glenora, or Edmonton-Riverview?

**Mr. Dach:** I think I'll submit that Mr. Carson, who has made his presentation earlier – that would be the proposal that I would follow for those neighbourhoods.

**The Chair:** To put them into West Henday?

**Mr. Dach:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** All right. Thanks.

Any questions on this side of the table?

Thanks. Very helpful. Thank you for the map. A clear presentation.

Okay. Moving on, we have Kieran Quirke.

**Mr. Quirke:** Good afternoon, commissioners. My name is Mr. Kieran Quirke. I'm a citizen and entrepreneur in the Drayton Valley-Devon constituency right now. I'm also the vice-chair of the Leduc-Nisku Economic Development Association. Thank you for this opportunity to talk today.

I'd like to comment on the proposed new riding of Devon-Parkland. I think there's a better way to gather rural communities of interest together that addresses concerns about mixing urban and rural ridings and strengthens the relationships and partnerships many of the communities have been building during the economic downturn. The map that I've provided to the commissioners will help describe these points.

Starting by Leduc and using highway 39 west and then south along highway 20 from Devon and then circling Sylvan Lake and finally heading back north towards Devon on secondary highways connects the communities of Devon, Calmar, Thorsby, Warburg, Rimbey, Poplar Bay, Gull Lake, and Sylvan Lake. This ties together the west side of the highway 2 corridor with a seat that runs north-south instead of several that cut across the highway following traditionally the county boundaries. I know that this represents a change of the arrangement of seats in the area and that the commission wants to minimize that when it can, but I think that this solves many issues. I'll discuss four of them very briefly.

First, this helps balance the proposed Drayton Valley-Rocky Mountain House riding in terms of geographic and population size. Using the census tracts and county population stats as a guide, I estimate that the idea I'm representing today would result in a seat right around the average for the province while taking some of the population from Drayton Valley-Rocky Mountain House to the west. You can see on the map there that it's down to about 8 per cent, I believe, of the quotient for Drayton Valley-Rocky Mountain House.

Two, the traditional orientation of seats has followed county lines and east-west highways in this area for a very long time, but the research shows that most of the people that live in this area get to highway 2 and head to the larger centres for services, employment, and entertainment. The idea that I'm presenting today ties together these primarily farming communities between the foothills and highway 2 that have a lot in common, more so than with communities further west such as Nordegg. Having a seat that covers these communities and their similarities allows for greater accessibility and responsiveness by the MLA.

Furthermore, Devon will always develop east, west, and south due to the river on the north edge. As a result, Devon will always be working with Leduc county, thereby local communities as well, such as Calmar and Thorsby. Adding Devon to the Parkland region does not follow this.

3:15

Finally, as vice-chair of the Leduc-Nisku Economic Development Association I know that a major shared interest of most of these communities that my presentation covers is economic development and tourism. Including Sylvan Lake and similar recreational communities in the area in one riding with this existing and strengthening the alliance of communities not only acknowledges the highway 2 corridor and the growing collaboration between these populations; it creates a seat that would be an accessible and single voice on a provincial level for keeping and strengthening this critical community of interest. Ultimately, we are working to ensure effective representation by elected officials. I believe that this idea that I presented today will better address an MLA's efforts to represent the population in general and the growing needs and efforts for economic development and tourism in the area.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

**The Chair:** All right. Am I correct in understanding that this proposal would take in, you're suggesting, just to start the conversation, this constituency that would be immediately southwest of Edmonton?

**Mr. Quirke:** That's right.

**The Chair:** You're suggesting that it take in parts of the current constituencies of Drayton Valley-Devon, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre, and Innisfail Sylvan Lake.

**Mr. Quirke:** Yes.

**The Chair:** All right. How much of the population would come out of Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre?

**Mr. Quirke:** Apparently, how they stand right now is – actually, I have the numbers for Drayton Valley-Devon: 42,467. It would go up to 50,285.

**The Chair:** So this would increase the population of Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre?

**Mr. Quirke:** Well, on the proposal as it is, it would decrease what the proposal has, but it would still be an increase overall.

**The Chair:** Okay. That's my question. Forget our proposal for the moment. Looking at the actual current one, you would add people to, not take them away from, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre?

**Mr. Quirke:** They would be taken away from the existing, like, the boundaries.

**The Chair:** Okay. So what population would you be taking out of the existing Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre?

**Mr. Quirke:** I'm actually not entirely sure.

**The Chair:** What's the population you would be taking out of Innisfail-Sylvan Lake?

**Mr. Quirke:** I can give you the total population that I put together for the suggestion.

**The Chair:** Okay. But what part of that comes from Innisfail-Sylvan Lake?

**Mr. Quirke:** I'm not sure.

**The Chair:** Similarly, you're not sure with regard to what comes out of Drayton Valley-Devon?

**Mr. Quirke:** For Drayton Valley-Devon, as it stands right now, it's 42,467, and it would become 50,285.

**The Chair:** But how many people would your proposal take out of the current Drayton Valley-Devon?

**Mr. Quirke:** I actually didn't do the math that way.

**The Chair:** Okay. No, that's fine. Then under the proposal that you're making for north of this new constituency, which would appear to take in Alberta Beach, Spruce Grove, lake country . . .

**Mr. Quirke:** Not Spruce Grove, no. From Devon down to Sylvan Lake.

**The Chair:** But the new constituency you're proposing above that, okay? This is your new constituency here, and then you've got this constituency above that . . .

**Mr. Quirke:** That's right.

**The Chair:** . . . with Spruce Grove in the middle, its own constituency.

**Mr. Quirke:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay. Comparing your proposed constituency to the current Whitecourt-St. Anne, are there any changes? It looks like there might be from just looking at the shapes on the map.

**Mr. Quirke:** That's right. The proposal takes the proposed Devon-Parkland. It removed Devon from that.

**The Chair:** It removes . . .

**Mr. Quirke:** Devon from the commission's proposal. So it would change the population based on that.

**The Chair:** Okay. But you've reconfigured our current Whitecourt-St. Anne in some way.

**Mr. Quirke:** I'm sorry. I just focused on the part that I was presenting . . .

**The Chair:** Okay. The part that you're interested in is this new constituency.

**Mr. Quirke:** Yes. That's right.

**The Chair:** Why is that better than what we proposed?

**Mr. Quirke:** Well, like I had said, I think that right now there are existing alliances between Calmar, Thorsby, Warburg, and several other communities there for economic development and tourism. Extending that south to Sylvan Lake, to me, makes logical sense because that is a tourism, recreational hub. Having a seat there provides all of them with one voice and one representative that can help support those aspects, so in terms of farming, agriculture, industry, recreation, and tourism.

**The Chair:** Yesterday we heard from the mayor of Devon when we were here – yesterday seems like a long time ago now – and he proposed exactly the opposite. He wants Drayton Valley back in the Devon constituency because he was concerned that the natural trade

alliances were east-west along the highway there rather than north-south. Any thoughts on that?

**Mr. Quirke:** In terms of industry like oil and gas and lumber that's likely true. I do understand that Drayton Valley-Devon only became a constituency seven or eight years ago – I can't remember when the last commission was – because Drayton Valley was kind of out there on their own, so they wanted to make a constituency that would involve them. It wasn't even based on trade in the first place, but that's probably changed in the last few years, focusing on oil and gas and lumber. In terms of small and medium-sized enterprises, tourism, sports tourism, and entertainment it would make sense to follow that kind of corridor. A lot of people go from Edmonton down to Pigeon Lake and Sylvan Lake, and a lot of people from those communities come into Edmonton for everything from work to entertainment.

**The Chair:** Okay. All right. Thanks.  
Any comments or questions?

**Mr. McLeod:** Just one. Your proposal is more this way, north-south than east-west, because ours was kind of this way, and yours is going this way.

**Mr. Quirke:** That's right.

**Mr. McLeod:** Okay. I'm just panicking again. As Justice Bielby pointed out, it's kind of a conflict from what we heard yesterday.

**Mr. Quirke:** Yeah. That's interesting.

**Mr. McLeod:** Okay. Thank you.

**Mr. Quirke:** The original proposal from the commission was that Devon would go into Parkland, and then Drayton Valley would go south to Sundre, including Rocky Mountain House, so this kind of follows the same path. It just kind of includes Devon just because, naturally, a lot of the economic development alliances are that way. The river is a natural boundary for that. Devon's never really going to grow much further north because of the river. Actually, it can't even go much further east right now just with the Edmonton annexation. It kind of made sense. In the last few years all these communities have been working together to strengthen each other economically and in terms of tourism, and I figured including something like Sylvan Lake would be a good boost for that.

**Mr. McLeod:** Okay. I'm going to ask the same question I asked last night. You have this working relationship, this co-ordination with all these communities. Is that going to be changed if the constituency changes this way? Whether you have one MLA or two MLAs, is that co-ordination going to change?

**Mr. Quirke:** The co-ordination itself and the relationships themselves won't change. The way I see it is that having one seat would be the most beneficial. Regardless of whoever got elected, it would be one voice that they can all talk to and that can represent them on a provincial level instead of two or three.

**Mr. McLeod:** Then again, we've also heard that two voices sometimes are better.

**Mr. Quirke:** Maybe, I guess.

**Mr. McLeod:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any questions, comments?

**Ms Livingstone:** I had just one. We've heard a number of submissions from counties not wanting to be cut up and the county lines to be maintained as much as possible. I don't know how familiar you are with county lines, but just looking at your map, it looks to me like your proposal would cut across Parkland county, Brazeau county, Wetaskiwin, and potentially Clearwater and Ponoka.

**Mr. Quirke:** That's right.

**Ms Livingstone:** Yeah. That's a lot of counties it would cut through.

**Mr. Quirke:** That's right. Yeah, following the highway corridors. I kind of came from the perspective of the economic development alliances. Being with Leduc-Nisku Economic Development, I've been working with Wetaskiwin on some things, Devon and Calmar, and so on. I know that they're kind of struggling, so I kind of figured this would be a good way to represent that.

**Ms Livingstone:** Thank you.

**Mr. Quirke:** You're welcome.

**The Chair:** Thanks. Thanks very much for coming today and making a presentation.

Heather Sobey.

**Ms Sobey:** Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to come and speak to you. I'm here today on behalf of the Whitecourt-Ste. Anne constituency association, and I'm going to tell you straight up that I'm nervous as heck. I'm a last-minute addition because the person who was going to do this is sick, so please bear with me.

3:25

**The Chair:** That's the NDP constituency association?

**Ms Sobey:** Yes, it is.

From our perspective one of the most important aspects of drawing these constituency boundaries is keeping like communities together. This means trying to keep urban with urban, rural with rural. Another important piece is ensuring indigenous voices are together in ridings to give them more weight within the constituency.

The highway 43 corridor provides the perfect trunk to build off, as you've already done. We appreciate the work that the boundary commission has done. We know it has not been easy. Our residents do have some further suggestions for you to consider so that the population of the region might become more balanced.

Because of shared communities of interest within the Wabamun area and the emphasis you are putting on population, we would like to suggest that you consider going into Parkland county with this new seat to bring it closer to the provincial average. Doing that could let you move the Devon seat further south or west, helping relieve some of the high population in either West Yellowhead or the Drayton Valley seat. You could also pull together several of the First Nations in the area, which I know has been a priority for you in this redistribution. This would add the Yellowhead highway as an artery in the middle of the seat rather than a border between them. The communities on the north side of the Yellowhead up highway 43 use Stony Plain-Spruce Grove as a service centre, but so do the communities south of highway 16 as well.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm going to interrupt because I don't understand your proposal, and I want to so I can take the benefit of your reasons for supporting it. What are the differences between our proposed St.

Anne-Stony Plain constituency and the proposal you make for the constituency?

**Ms Sobey:** Okay. One big proposal is taking Stony Plain and Spruce Grove and making it its own constituency, as has been proposed earlier. We would also go south of highway 16 to encompass some of the areas that were in the existing Stony Plain riding. The similarities between Lac Ste. Anne and the areas around Wabamun and south of highway 16: there are lots of cottage countries, just like in Lac Ste. Anne.

**The Chair:** Okay. You're getting ahead of me.

**Ms Sobey:** Oh, sorry.

**The Chair:** You want to put Stony Plain and Spruce Grove together, and you've heard our comments earlier that that would make it about 80,000 people in that constituency.

**Ms Sobey:** Okay; so when we . . .

**The Chair:** Hang on just for a sec. I shouldn't have said that because I was digressing. You want to then take the rest of what the current Stony Plain constituency has and what other parts of the province?

**Ms Sobey:** Okay. We would be going south of highway 16, which I don't believe is in your proposed boundary change. The Wabamun-Lac Ste. Anne, if we combined that to make a constituency area, would be 51,131 . . .

**The Chair:** Okay. You're still – I'm not following. We've got the part south. Right now your constituency is the part of highway 16 south, and you want to keep part of your current Ste. Anne-Stony Plain constituency.

**Ms Sobey:** Right. Yes.

**The Chair:** What's the rest you want to keep?

**Ms Sobey:** We want to keep all of Lac Ste. Anne – I guess that's in there, and it's in the current riding – but then leave out Stony Plain and Spruce Grove and then expand a bit south.

**The Chair:** Expand a bit south but not as far as south of highway 16.

**Ms Sobey:** It is south of highway 16, all the way to, I think, Tomahawk.

**The Chair:** Got it. Okay. I should be adding south, not extracting. Got it. Thank you.

**Ms Munn:** How far south into Devon?

**Ms Sobey:** You know, I'm sorry. I'm not well versed in this. I don't know if that includes Devon or not. I believe it does.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. Tomahawk: you think it should go as far south as Tomahawk?

**Ms Sobey:** That's what we discussed as an association, yes.

**Ms Munn:** All right. I see where Tomahawk is, but I don't see an east-west road.

**Ms Sobey:** Oh, okay. Entwistle would be on the west side, and east I guess would be . . .



**Ms Munn:** Entwistle.

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah. Entwistle is on highway 16 heading towards Jasper.

**Ms Munn:** Oh, way up here. Yes. So Entwistle . . .

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah. That would be on the western side, and the eastern side – I’m sorry – I know is just outside of Edmonton, but I don’t know exactly where.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. Then as far south as Tomahawk. But at Tomahawk there’s no east-west, so drawing the line east-west, having come south . . .

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah. It’s a little bit south of Tomahawk.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. So maybe the Parkland county.

**Ms Sobey:** Northleigh? I’m sorry. I don’t know what that community is.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. But at any rate, south enough to take in the population that may be necessary.

**Ms Sobey:** Yes. When we talked about this, if we were combining this area, it would be a population of approximately 51,000, about maybe 9 per cent over, so it could be tweaked.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. So go south of 16 from Entwistle to the eastern boundary – right? – as far as necessary to make up the numbers.

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah. Hoping to keep a large agricultural base together there, right?

**The Chair:** Why, in your view, would this allow the MLA to more effectively represent the residents of that area than in our proposal?

**Ms Sobey:** The current riding – it can stretch from one end to the other – is two hours. If we were to do this riding, the distance of travel between communities would be just over an hour, so it would be easier to travel.

**The Chair:** In our proposed riding that would also be true. It would reduce the geographic size quite dramatically.

**Ms Sobey:** Yes. I believe so.

**The Chair:** What other reasons are there?

**Ms Sobey:** The other reason is, again, as you said, the cottage country. That’s big in Lac Ste. Anne. It’s also big around Wabamun. There are lots of summer villages. Extending and including Wabamun would also include a lot of those summer villages, which the MLA for that area, I believe, is currently doing. Again, it’s keeping an agricultural base together as well. Then the thought was that Stony Plain and Spruce Grove are urban areas. Perhaps combining those would serve their purposes whereas the rest of the riding is more lake based, cottage based.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.  
Comments, Mrs. Day?

**Mrs. Day:** Well, I’m just thinking about natural boundaries. You know, highway 16 seems like a natural boundary, but you’re saying that it’s not a barrier to your community to go . . .

**Ms Sobey:** I don’t believe so. Given the agriculture base, which is a large part of Lac Ste. Anne, I think it just is a natural extension of that. That’s what we thought.

**Mrs. Day:** And the second question. There was a submission – I’m trying to pull it up; it’s been a long day – or two, maybe, about the name of what we’ve recorded in here as Ste. Anne and the suggestion of Lac Ste. Anne being really the accurate name.

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah. Well, currently it is Lac Ste. Anne. That would be one suggestion because Lac Ste. Anne is a huge part of that area.

**The Chair:** No. Currently it’s Whitecourt-Ste. Anne.

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah, and it would be nice to include it.

**The Chair:** You want to rename it Lac Ste. Anne?

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah. Just a suggestion.

**Mrs. Day:** It’s good to be accurate. What people in the community call it we should call it.

**Ms Sobey:** Right.

**Mrs. Day:** If that’s Lac Ste. Anne as opposed to Ste. Anne, then that’s good for us to know.

**The Chair:** Okay. That does lead me to one question. Let’s say we can only grant part of your wishes, and let’s say that we determine at the end of the day that Stony Plain and Spruce Grove can’t be combined, so Stony Plain remains in your riding.

**Ms Sobey:** Right.

**The Chair:** Can we still add the population south of highway 16 to pick up the Wabamun area and be anywhere close to provincial average size?

**Ms Sobey:** I think we’d be a bit over the provincial average size.

**The Chair:** But do you know – okay. A better way to ask this question is: how many people live south of highway 16 that you’d like to pick up?

**Ms Sobey:** I’m sorry. I don’t have the answer to that. I’m sure the person who was supposed to do that would be able to tell you.

**Ms Munn:** The issue of going south of 16 was just to make up for the population after having gotten rid of Stony Plain . . .

**Ms Sobey:** Yes. Exactly.

**Ms Munn:** . . . and it would be acceptable to make up the population that way once you got rid of Stony Plain. So if we’re not getting rid of Stony Plain, then we don’t need to be making up population.

**Ms Sobey:** Yeah. Probably.

**The Chair:** But yesterday the mayor of Devon gave us some reasons for doing exactly this, which were different than what you’ve pointed out, but it kind of just is part of his view of the world.

**Ms Sobey:** Right. Yeah.

**The Chair:** That’s a bit of karma there.  
Okay. Anything else?

**Ms Munn:** No.

**Mr. McLeod:** I'm good.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thanks so much for coming.

**Ms Sobey:** Thank you for this opportunity.

**The Chair:** All right. The next registered speaker is Mic Farrell.

**Mr. Farrell:** Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to present. I am here as the president of the Edmonton-McClung NDP Constituency Association. I can keep this relatively short because I happen to agree wholeheartedly with the presentation that our MLA just made. The loss of Jamieson Place in the proposal just doesn't work well for this community because of the split of the Willowby Community League. The addition of communities north of the Whitemud really complicates the riding, whereas it would be much simpler to go straight west to the city boundary on 215th Street, taking in Glastonbury and Granville. Then you have a very natural boundary at the Whitemud. You have the city boundary on the west side, and then it works down the Henday to Lessard Road and comes across once you add Jamieson back in.

3:35

You have proposed that the Cameron Heights and Rutherford communities be moved out. As much as we hate to lose those communities, it makes sense from a population perspective given what we've proposed being within 3 per cent of the average population.

That's where the constituency association has landed. We met with the constituency association that is north of the Whitemud, currently called Edmonton-Meadowlark, and the president and people in that constituency association agreed that it didn't make sense to separate those three communities north of the Whitemud from their constituency. I think Mr. Carson's presentation reflected that.

**The Chair:** Do you know how many people live in those three constituencies north of the Whitemud?

**Mr. Farrell:** I don't. I know the general number for what we've proposed, which was the map that Mr. Dach gave you. That number is 45,500.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thanks.

Mrs. Day, any questions? Mr. McLeod? Ms Livingstone? Ms Munn?

Thank you so much.

**Mr. Farrell:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** All right. The next presenter is Philip Penrod.

**Mr. Penrod:** Good afternoon. I thank you for this opportunity to present to the commission my views as a resident of Beaumont. My name is Philip Penrod, resident of Beaumont and a constituent of the current Leduc-Beaumont electoral district. I'm here with some thoughts and recommendations for that constituency in reaction to what you've proposed and some issues that I see within the boundaries. Aside from those comments, I'd like to make one additional comment that sort of speaks to the section of your interim report titled Other Recommendations to Assist in Achieving Effective Representation.

In the past few years Beaumont's population has grown dramatically. From what I know of the city and the constituency, that's only going to continue. The same story down the road in

Leduc; in fact, according to Stats Canada Leduc is currently the 14th fastest growing municipality not just in Alberta but across Canada. Beaumont is the fifth. With Beaumont and Leduc growing so quickly, it would seem to make sense to shrink the size of the seat a bit to take this into account. From reading your executive summary and other parts of your interim report, this seems to be in common with goals expressed by your commission. The constituents deserve effective and focused representation for their issues, which they may not get with so many more people pouring into this fast expanding area.

Given this, I propose that the commission redraw the constituency to be closer around the main population centres, the areas immediately around them, and to continue to include the Edmonton International Airport. That could be done along range road 235 to the east and range road 255 to the west. The map that I tabled shows not just the changes that would affect this constituency but also the surrounding constituencies.

**The Chair:** By how much would you reduce your population if we took your suggestion?

**Mr. Penrod:** I don't have the raw number, but I do have – your current proposal would have us at a plus 11 per cent variance. This proposed change would take us down to a plus 6 per cent variance, which, given the stated, projected, and continuing growth of the area, gives us more room to grow into that and not have to rejig things again eight years down the road.

**The Chair:** So the land to the east freed up by moving the boundary to the west: to what constituency would that be added?

**Mr. Penrod:** To Battle River-Wainwright. Just to speak to that, it makes sense for both Rolly View and Looma to join Battle River-Wainwright because they have similar interests with other communities that you've already suggested join that constituency such as Hay Lakes. This follows the rationale you expressed in your report for putting New Sarepta also in that area.

**The Chair:** How many people would that add to Stettler-Wainwright?

**Mr. Penrod:** I believe that takes away – hmm. I'm not sure. I tried to kind of copy my map, because I only had the one copy of it, onto the populations of your interim recommended electoral divisions. I don't think I did that well.

**The Chair:** Okay. But in another way you don't know – I'm not faulting you. I'm just saying, if you happen to have that number, do you know how much that would reduce your population by and thus increase Battle River's? Somebody must have known, or you couldn't have calculated the 6 per cent variance.

**Mr. Penrod:** Correct. I think that as I made my notes – the map is correct that I submitted – I may have made a mistake, so I would say to defer to the map.

**The Chair:** So you don't know the population right off that that would move out of Leduc-Beaumont.

**Mr. Penrod:** It moves out of Leduc-Beaumont 5 percentage points, lowering Leduc-Beaumont from a plus 11 variance to a plus 6.

**The Chair:** But that also includes the land on the west that you want to get rid of.

**Mr. Penrod:** Correct. Yeah. And I don't have that breakdown.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Penrod:** Apologies.

**The Chair:** Similarly, do you know the population on the west, the number of people that would disappear if we followed your recommendation that we make your western boundary range road 255?

**Mr. Penrod:** I don't have that breakdown in front of me either.

**The Chair:** All right. And what do you propose we do with the population that lies between highway 255 and highway 2? Where would you add that population?

**Mr. Penrod:** I'm trying to visualize that. I think I'm misunderstanding what you're asking.

**The Chair:** Okay. You want to shrink Leduc-Beaumont by bringing it in on the east and west sides.

**Mr. Penrod:** Correct.

**The Chair:** Okay. A better way to ask that question is: for the population to the west that will no longer be part of Leduc-Beaumont, what constituency would it join?

**Mr. Penrod:** Correct. I believe that would be your proposed Parkland.

**The Chair:** Devon-Parkland?

**Mr. Penrod:** Devon-Parkland.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Penrod:** Again, as many of the submitters have acknowledged, your job is not an easy one. I think my last piece will speak somewhat to that. Do you have any further questions?

**The Chair:** No. I just wanted to understand what we were talking about.

**Mr. Penrod:** Yeah.

In the remainder of my time I'd just like to acknowledge – the first presenter this afternoon concluded her remarks by saying that she's a sewer and a cook or baker and that if you don't have the right recipe or if you don't have the right pattern, you're never going to get the right result.

My observation is this, that the problems are not problems because of electoral boundaries and that so long as we continually try to address them simply by adjusting boundaries, we're going to continue to have some of the same problems. Rather, the problem might best be addressed through electoral reform proper. I would suggest that a move to some form of proportional representation would better address the fundamental democratic value of voter parity, that you continue to uphold in your deliberations. I would expect that perhaps Commissioner Day might especially be interested in looking at this. I believe that the problems with voter parity are more a product of our adherence to the outdated first past the post system with a single district and single member than with any particular boundary.

3:45

**The Chair:** That's beyond our jurisdiction, as we say in our report because this was raised in the first round of public hearings. We don't have the ability to change the way people are elected in Alberta. That's not within our jurisdiction.

**Mr. Penrod:** Of course. However, in the section of your report entitled Other Recommendations to Assist in Achieving Effective Representation you've already endorsed two innovations with the expectation that these technological innovations and their leveraging can actually improve our democracy and its functioning. Those technological innovations are cellular coverage and high-speed Internet, and you've made some specific requests that those be expanded and made more robust. I would suggest that it would be in the same spirit to make a recommendation that a policy innovation or legal innovation might also be considered in order to – while I acknowledge it is . . .

**The Chair:** And what is that legal innovation? Proportional representation?

**Mr. Penrod:** Yeah. I understand that it wouldn't be within your purview to recommend a particular policy but to recommend that the government take that under review through the appropriate commission.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

Mrs. Day, any comments? Mr. McLeod?

**Mr. McLeod:** I'm good. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Ms Livingstone?

**Ms Livingstone:** No. I don't have any questions.

**The Chair:** Thanks so much.

All right. The next presenter is Jim Hill.

**Mr. Hill:** Good afternoon. I'm here just as an interested citizen. I have the benefit of having lived in Terra Rosa, which is currently in Edmonton-Meadowlark, and also the Callingwood area, which is in Edmonton-McClung. You know, I listened to Jon Carson and Lorne Dach, and I just want to reinforce that the Whitemud really is a very good boundary to be the northern part of Edmonton-McClung. It's where we shop. It's where we vote. It's where our MLA's office is. It's south of the Whitemud. In the north is Terra Rosa in Edmonton-Meadowlark, which I think is now going to Edmonton-West Henday. As a resident I like what I heard. I saw the map that Mr. Dach had. I don't have any numbers, but I understand they've done the work. If Edmonton-McClung kind of goes more east-west, it fits your numbers. Edmonton-West Henday: I'm sure you'll figure that out.

Thank you very much. Any questions?

**The Chair:** Any questions?

**Mr. McLeod:** No.

**Ms Livingstone:** Nothing from me.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

**Mrs. Day:** Short and sweet.

**The Chair:** Alexandria Fisher.

**Ms Fisher:** I will try to keep this as brief as possible because I know you've had a very long day. I'm here talking about Edmonton-Calder and the alternative name you've proposed, Edmonton-North West. Overall I'm fairly happy with the proposed boundary adjustments, but there is one issue that really gnaws at me, which is the omission of the communities of Wellington, Athlone, and Calder. When I look at this constituency – I recently moved out of

it – I’m very emotionally attached. My husband personally likes Edmonton-McClung, in which we now live. The principles I’ve been using to apply to my recommendations are the natural features such as the Yellowhead and increased demographic homogeneity or balance of homogeneity within neighbourhoods. All recommendations fall within the prescribed variance.

We would recommend to eliminate – if you’re looking at the map of the constituency, the blue boundary is the proposed boundary, the red areas are the communities that we’re recommending be removed, and the green ones are communities that we’re recommending be added back in. Adding Wellington, Athlone, and Calder makes sense in terms of a natural barrier, which is the Yellowhead, in terms of the demographics of the area and community cohesion.

If you look on the next page, I have an example of the demographic homogeneity of the neighbourhood . . .

**The Chair:** Just if I can interrupt . . .

**Ms Fisher:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** So you’d be proposing to add the communities in red back into Castle Downs . . .

**Ms Fisher:** Yes.

**The Chair:** . . . and take the communities in green from the proposed Glenora.

**Ms Fisher:** Yes. We are removing 9,868 individuals in those three communities and adding 10,292 individuals, based on the 2016 municipal census data.

**The Chair:** Sorry. Could you give me those numbers again?

**Ms Fisher:** Oh, sorry. Taking out 9,868 individuals and adding back in 10,292 individuals. With this it would reduce the variance to approximately negative 5.6 per cent.

**The Chair:** Why would that allow your MLA to more effectively represent the residents of that area?

**Ms Fisher:** It is because of the relationship that I’ve seen him build. As well, the needs of these three communities are very similar to those of Kensington, Rosslyn, and Lauderdale. The incomes as well as mobility issues are similar, and the languages have similar distributions. So I feel like the MLA can easily access these communities whereas putting them into Meadowlark would make it very difficult for the MLA to access those communities as well as build the same relationships. I think the Yellowhead equals a good barrier because once you get over farther to the west, you’re ending up in some industrial areas as well as some new builds.

**Ms Munn:** Why would you move Caernarvon and Carlisle to Castle Downs and not to Griesbach? You want to keep Griesbach?

**Ms Fisher:** Preferably.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. So we draw this line down and put in Griesbach, and we’re going to have a little T shape added onto the . . .

**Ms Fisher:** Yes. Those actually were the boundaries from the previous inclination.

**Ms Munn:** Yeah. I see.

**Ms Fisher:** You know what I mean.

**Ms Munn:** So just this little U shape is coming out.

**Ms Fisher:** Yes, because these are also fairly mature communities . . .

**Ms Munn:** Gotcha.

**Ms Fisher:** . . . whereas Griesbach is experiencing some population growth.

**The Chair:** If I can nip in here.

**Ms Fisher:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** I accept that Wellington, Athlone, and Calder are similar in age to Kensington, Rosslyn, and Lauderdale, but it seems to me that the communities you want to keep of Cumberland, Hudson, Pembina, Carlton, and Oxford are similar in age – they’re relatively new, within the last 20 years – to Carlisle, Baranow, and Caernarvon. I’ve got to get my Castle Downs names down. And you’re saying, “Well, the red constituencies aren’t similar to us,” yet the very next-door neighbour constituencies are of the same age. Can you explain that to me? Am I wrong in that assessment?

**Ms Fisher:** This is kind of where I bring in the citizen voice aspect. If you added those communities, they’re more similar to your Hudson and your Oxford in terms of demographics and income and have different needs to your Wellington, Athlone, and Calder. I feel like the difference in some of the socioeconomic factors would kind of overwhelm the less affluent communities such as Kensington, Rosslyn, and Lauderdale to the south. If you’re looking on the next page, you’ll see where I’ve highlighted similar socioeconomic factors between the communities, and these communities have built a neighbourhood feel with their community leagues and their schools.

3:55

One example of them really kind of coming together is that they have fought long and hard together as a group to keep their local schools. Wellington’s unfortunately closed down a couple years ago, but they have built this activist community where they’ve really become integrated.

My major problem is having the access to the MLA if they’re south of the Yellowhead.

**The Chair:** Thank you. So what you’re saying, if I can summarize, is that while some of the neighbourhoods you want to keep are the same age as some of the neighbourhoods you want to move into Edmonton-Castle Downs, socioeconomically they’re more similar to the older neighbourhoods you want to move back into Edmonton-North West.

**Ms Fisher:** Yes. And that supplemental document I provided actually illustrates it in terms of highest education, household income by neighbourhood, language by neighbourhood, and employment status by neighbourhood to just kind of illustrate the socioeconomic differences between the areas. I don’t know if you’ve driven around the area. Even just driving through the neighbourhood, it’s a very stark contrast.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you. Sorry; go ahead.

**Ms Fisher:** Oh, sorry. I just have another point in terms of the name. I don’t identify as west, as someone who has lived in this neighbourhood for a long time. When we go to services, we tend to go into the middle, so our community’s kind of imaginary west line is St. Albert Trail. I’d say we’re Edmonton north more than

anything else in terms of how we see ourselves. If the community of Calder is retained, the name could be kept as Edmonton-Calder. As well, Calder was a stand-alone community way back in the day, and that meets the naming criteria you proposed.

**The Chair:** Okay. Just an editorial comment. It's not so much how the residents of the area think of themselves but how other people in the rest of Edmonton think of that community. If I ask somebody, "What constituency do you live in?" and they said Edmonton-North, I wouldn't necessarily think that they were running along the St. Albert Trail, which is northwest. I mean, that's just something to think about there because we don't want to confuse.

**Ms Fisher:** That's another point with the name Calder. A lot of people in the community really identify as being in the Edmonton-Calder constituency, and because of kind of the socioeconomic stratification in the area, I imagine that it may cause a significant amount of confusion. I know I've worked polls in the past, and we've had some issues regarding people being able to find their correct polling place and having to redirect and having confusion around ballots and language. That's just an offhand comment from something I have observed.

Also, I wasn't going to speak on Edmonton-McClung, which is where we currently moved, but I have to say that the presentations on it actually convinced me that retaining Jamieson Place is probably a good idea.

**The Chair:** Thanks.

Any questions? Ms Livingstone.

**Ms Livingstone:** I just have one question. Have you thought about how your proposal, then, impacts Edmonton-Castle Downs, Edmonton-Decore, and Edmonton-Manning? We always say that as we move one thing, it shifts everything else. I was just looking at my sort of old and new maps and wondering how I'd fix that domino effect.

**Ms Fisher:** Absolutely. I can actually answer those questions for you.

**Ms Livingstone:** Perfect.

**Ms Fisher:** Giving those back to Edmonton-Castle Downs will make it around plus 10 or 11 per cent. As well, looking at those western communities, they kind of could go either way with the variances because right now we're negative. It seems like Meadowlark is also negative. My one concern is that wherever those western communities like Starling and Big Lake go, those communities are expanding so fast. Wherever those communities land, just accounting for that population growth – because that's kind of what happened in Calder previously. Our variance was fairly out of whack because of the large amount of population growth within the area between electoral boundary commissions. It makes me so happy that this is being considered. It just makes me happy.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Any comments or questions here?

**Mrs. Day:** We're happy we're making somebody happy.

**Ms Fisher:** Well, if you give me back my Calder, I'll be really happy.

**Mrs. Day:** Say it ends up being plus 10. Is this area and Rampart – sorry. That's an industrial area. Are there any of these areas still growing and filling in, or are these kind of completed communities?

**Ms Fisher:** Within the map right now it's completed. It's the stuff on the other side of the Henday that is the fast ...

**Mrs. Day:** That jog up here ...

**Ms Fisher:** Pardon?

**Mrs. Day:** The jog up here above the Henday hasn't been developed yet by the looks of it.

**Ms Fisher:** Yes. That is growing. That jog up there from 2014 to 2016 increased by around, I think, 2,000 people, so I think that in terms of exponential growth it's on that outer edge. But the really outer edge is the part on the other side of the Henday. That's the exploding part right now. Everything else is kind of the industrial area. I think there are about, oh, 126 people living in some of those industrial areas from precedents set prior to the zoning change.

**Mrs. Day:** One more question. The red area, this community: do they see themselves belonging more to the Castle Downs community?

**Ms Fisher:** Oh, yeah.

**Mrs. Day:** We heard some presenter earlier today on Castle Downs. They might have talked about that, but my laptop died. These people would see themselves more as Castle Downs? I mean, these are Castle names, right?

**Ms Fisher:** Yeah. On the map it kind of looks weird with the jog, but in terms of community feel they're completely separate.

**Mrs. Day:** As long as somebody wants them somewhere.

**Ms Fisher:** We would have them if we could.

Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it.

**The Chair:** All right. Thanks for coming out. Terrific.

All right. Our final registered speaker is Chris Nielsen.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Good afternoon, commission members. I appreciate the opportunity to come here today to speak to you. I was actually rather excited to be able to present. I was going to inundate you with yet more paperwork. I had broken down the current map of Edmonton-Decore into its neighbourhoods, labelled, as well as the population for each of those zones. I've conveniently left those at my office, so now I'm without my numbers other than just the percentages. Upon request I'm sure I could probably get those to you immediately through Aaron. I do have the high-level maps should you require those. Would you like? I have a few copies of those.

**The Chair:** What do you mean by the high-level maps?

**Mr. Nielsen:** It's sort of an expanded view of the Edmonton area.

**The Chair:** Anything that you think would assist your presentation.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Absolutely.

I know you guys have had a very busy time with all the different submissions that you've been getting and everything that you need to try to consider. I've been in and around Edmonton-Decore now for quite a few years. I've been living on the north side itself since 1999, specifically in the neighbourhood of Evansdale in Edmonton-Decore since 2008. Of course, I have the great privilege of being able to represent the riding of Edmonton-Decore in the Legislature.

4:05

I think the community of Edmonton-Decore is very reflective of what Alberta looks like and Canada in general. I'm blessed with a very diverse riding not only in its peoples, the different kinds of jobs people do. Even its neighbourhoods are very, very diverse.

Now, I guess with respect to what the commission was tasked with, I know it's a very big job. You've been rather focused with regard to population in terms of one of the things that you had to take into account. I understand the reasons for moving the neighbourhood of Killarney, which is in the southern west part of the riding of Edmonton-Decore. You had proposed moving it into Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood and also, of course, making similar changes of this type throughout the city.

As the MLA for the area, though, I have to say that the people in that community are very connected to the neighbourhoods of both Balwin and Glengarry and the people who live around them. Their kids all go to the same schools. They shop at the same stores. As you know, 97th Street is a corridor of businesses, and Edmonton-Decore itself houses three major malls within it. These folks coach the same soccer teams, and of course the list can go on and on. I was a little bit disappointed when I saw that the community of Killarney would get moved into Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. The MLA for that riding is now going to have to build new connections there. A lot of new Canadians that live there are just getting comfortable with the political process, and they're going to have to learn how to connect with a new MLA.

It creates a disjointed area for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood as well. For any of you who have had the opportunity to try to cross the Yellowhead, it is a very, very busy traffic zone, and it's a very significant natural divide within the city because we know that when we include the rail line as well, it spans right across the width of the city, almost more so than even a river. There's a distinction between the neighbourhoods and residents north of the Yellowhead corridor. As I said, I'm proud to say that I'm a north sider as well, and our previous speaker had made mention of that. With the four ridings that are in the north, we kind of consider ourselves north-northeast, the northeast team, really, which is Edmonton-Calder, Edmonton-Castle Downs, Edmonton-Decore, and Edmonton-Manning. So it's a bit of a negative for those folks, I think, moving out Killarney.

I guess I could almost say the same, a little bit, for the neighbourhood of Crystallina Nera, which is in the very north of the riding, specifically called, of course, Crystallina east and west right now. Whereas my communities down in the south are very old, 45 to 50 years old, Crystallina is a newer community. It's only about five years old at this point. I remember that in the last municipal election they were maybe building 15 houses at the time, in various stages of production, so they have basically had one MLA at this juncture in time. I think, though, that they've been well represented in Edmonton-Decore, and it would be a shame to lose them. That said, I know that Decore has grown in population up in the north, in Crystallina Nera East and West and, of course, in Shaughnessy to some degree as well. In much of the province, you know, there needs to be balance, which I know you guys have been striving very, very hard to try to have happen.

With regard to adding McLeod and then removing, as I'd mentioned, Killarney, it kind of doesn't make sense to me. We seem to be trading one for the other, and we're not actually looking at moving the entire neighbourhood of McLeod. It seems like you're suggesting moving only half of it, so now we're breaking up the community of McLeod in Edmonton-Manning.

One of the other things I should point out is that a lot of these communities, of course, are involved in their area councils, which

is a mixing of the community leagues in the area. Killarney belongs to area 2. Bill Maxim was hoping to have been able to come to present to you today as well. He's also the returning officer for Edmonton-Decore. Of course, we've had the opportunity to chat, and we sort of seem to feel the same need to keep Killarney in the area. It would break that up quite a bit.

Your proposal to add Kilkenny with the border being 66th Street does make sense. It's, you know, an extremely straight and very natural divide going even as far south as 118th Ave. That certainly makes sense within your proposal. However, as I had mentioned with McLeod, if we were to put that back in there, I know there are some population concerns that you do have, so it would be possible, I think, to move the neighbourhood of York into Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

As you're probably aware, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview has pretty much maxed out in terms of where it can grow. At this time I'm not aware of any plans to expand that could become part of Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, so they're pretty much stagnant, which would allow them to take on some additional population. That would also, of course, bring the natural boundary of 144th Avenue between Edmonton-Manning and Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview even, again, keeping things very simple and straightforward for the community members that live in that area.

I would certainly urge the commission to reconsider how it is weighing population against other consideration that it's taking into account. As someone who has effectively represented this constituency for over two years now, I like to joke that I can make it to any corner of my riding in 10 minutes in rush hour traffic, so I'm very blessed in that degree. You're, I guess, to strive with population and to try to keep that.

I realize that keeping Crystallina Nera would significantly bump up Edmonton-Decore, probably to about a 15 per cent average. As I mentioned, the four north-side constituencies, when you look at us currently, we average about a plus 8 per cent quotient. Certainly, we could take on Kilkenny and bump us up to that 15 per cent if you wanted to leave it there. If not, if that was unacceptable to the commission, I'm sure you could probably start looking to the north in terms of what you might want to do with the riding of Crystallina Nera.

**The Chair:** Where is Crystallina now?

**Mr. Nielsen:** It's in the very north of the riding.

**The Chair:** And if we were to move it, where should we move it?

**Mr. Nielsen:** You could probably move that into Edmonton-Castle Downs. Of course, it is starting to stretch Edmonton-Castle Downs in terms of its sort of geographic location a little bit. As you had talked about just earlier, it kind of doesn't fit with the castle theme, but I think that there is still the possibility to move it in there, thus keeping, like I said, the northeast ridings that I had mentioned within about the 8 per cent quotient, which I know you have allowed for in other urban ridings, such as in Calgary.

With that, I'm happy to take any questions that you might have, and I hope that my considerations meet with some degree of approval.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Any comments? Mr. McLeod.

**Mr. McLeod:** The only thing is that McLeod isn't going anywhere because I'm staying in the little village of Acme. Just so you know, I'm not moving.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Oh. I hadn't actually noticed.

**The Chair:** We have certain commissioners who are very lucky to have constituencies named after them.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I will totally stay with you on that one.

**Mr. McLeod:** I'm not moving.

**Ms Livingstone:** They don't want you, Bruce.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I will fight that all the way to the Legislature for you.

**Ms Munn:** Could I just clarify this? The proposal right now is that Edmonton-Decore's northern boundary is 167th Avenue.

**Mr. Nielsen:** The northern boundary currently runs from 97th Street to 82nd Street and 167th Avenue, but then it goes north up 82nd Street.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. Not presently. I'm talking about the proposal.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Oh, the proposal. Yes. Your proposal would pull out Crystallina and the neighbourhood of Shaughnessy.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. Crystallina, is it north of 167th Avenue?

**Mr. Nielsen:** It is. Yes. So Shaughnessy would be in between 167th Avenue and – I'm trying to remember the exact street – I think it's about 174th Avenue.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. And you want that restored?

**Mr. Nielsen:** I'd like to see Shaughnessy come back.

**Ms Munn:** So Shaughnessy and Crystallina, are those two different neighbourhoods?

4:15

**Mr. Nielsen:** They are.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. So you want to restore Shaughnessy and Crystallina.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Yeah. If you look at the map north of 167th Avenue, Shaughnessy will run lengthwise between 82nd Street and 66th Street. Crystallina Nera is actually divided.

**Ms Munn:** This part.

**Mr. Nielsen:** So you would have Shaughnessy here and Crystallina Nera east and west.

**Ms Munn:** All right. And that's what you want to see restored?

**Mr. Nielsen:** Yeah. Again, they're rather newer neighbourhoods. Shaughnessy being a little bit older than Crystallina, so at this time . . .

**Ms Munn:** So lose McLeod, get Crystallina and Shaughnessy back, and put Killarney back.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Put Killarney back, and we'd be willing to take on Kilkenny. As I said, I can reach any corner of the riding in 10 minutes in rush hour traffic, so taking that on would not be a problem. Even at 15 per cent it would be rather easy.

**Ms Munn:** But we have Kilkenny in the proposals.

**Mr. Nielsen:** In your proposal, yes. So I would agree with your proposal there to move that in. It used to be part of Edmonton-Decore. It was taken out going into the 2008 provincial general election.

**Ms Munn:** Why do you think that restoring Killarney is important for Killarney?

**Mr. Nielsen:** It's part of the area 2 council in terms of the different neighbourhoods and the community leagues. It would now sort of be almost like an island by itself north of the Yellowhead railroad track boundary, so you would have an MLA coming north for essentially one neighbourhood in itself.

**Ms Munn:** I see.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Whereas they're already part of a group. You know, they're constantly working together. It would be a shame to have this neighbourhood now all of a sudden have to go to a second MLA when the rest of their neighbourhood folks are working with another.

**Ms Munn:** Okay. Thank you.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** All right. Well, this will bring our afternoon hearing to a close. Thanks very much to everyone for attending and for your input.

[The hearing adjourned at 4:17 p.m.]











