



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission
Public Hearings

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Electoral Boundaries Commission

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Electoral Boundaries Commission Public Hearings – Calgary

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Fred Nash, Mayor, Town of Rocky Mountain House
Robert Nelson
Blake Richards, MP, Banff-Airdrie
Peter Ries
Stephen Utz, Community Growth Manager, City of Airdrie
Josi Wiebe, Vice-chair, Advocates for North Calgary High School

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[Justice Bielby in the chair]

The Chair: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We've decided we're going to start a few minutes early because we're here and ready to go and so are you, so why not do that? Welcome to this hearing of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. We're delighted to see the number of you that have come out this evening to participate in this process.

I'll start off by introducing the commission. I'm Justice Myra Bielby of the Court of Appeal of Alberta. I reside in Edmonton, but at the moment I'm chairing the Electoral Boundaries Commission, as you can see. The other members of the commission are, to my immediate left, Laurie Livingstone of Calgary; Jean Munn of Calgary; to my right, Bruce McLeod, mayor of Acme; and to his right, Gwen Day of Carstairs.

Together we were appointed by the provincial government last October to undertake the work of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, which basically involves looking at the boundaries of Alberta's 87 provincial constituencies and deciding whether to recommend any changes for movement in those boundaries so that they can be adjusted before the next provincial election. This is a process that's required by a piece of legislation in Alberta called the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act. Of course, I've misplaced my copy. In any event that was passed in 1990, but of course there was an earlier version of that act in place ever since the province was created in 1905. The reason for it is that over time people move in and out of different communities everywhere, and that can affect the number of people living in individual constituencies.

A perfect example of that is Alberta, which has had the most rapid growth rate in history over the last eight years since the last Electoral Boundaries Commission and the most significant growth rate in Canada. In the last eight years Alberta's population has grown by more than 600,000 people, a more than 14 per cent growth rate. The next closest is the city of Vancouver at 6.9 per cent, so we're twice as fast as Vancouver, which is amazing when you look at those pictures on the news of Vancouver. But not all of those people moved equally into each of our 87 ridings. In fact, they preferred Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, and Fort McMurray, so whereas in 2010 the redistricting done then left most of the ridings in the province within 5 per cent of the average size of a riding, if we were to call an election tomorrow, a vote in Jasper, Alberta, for example, would be three and a half times as effective as a vote cast by a Calgary living in Calgary-South East. That's because the population growth in Calgary-South East has been so phenomenal and all in a very recent time period.

Our task is to look at each of the 87 boundaries and decide whether they should be moved out to pick up additional population or moved in to reduce the population size to bring it closer to provincial average, and this process is all set out in the legislation. We started the work in January and February by having another series of hearings around the province and got people's input at that time and then deliberated and produced an interim set of recommendations, which we tabled with the Speaker of the Legislature on May 24, setting out different recommendations. We didn't recommend everything be changed, of course, but we addressed each of the constituencies and gave reasons for our recommendations throughout.

Our job now is to go back, consult with Albertans once again, and we've done that in writing as well as at hearings. Prior to the issuance of the initial report we had 749 written submissions. This time as of last Friday we've had 500 written submissions and many more people coming out to the public hearings, so that's been

terrific, the degree of uptake on this. Our goal is to finalize our recommendations, to revisit each one in light of the information we've received, the new ideas we've got, see whether we want to amend any – I'm guessing we probably will – and come up with a revised version, which we have until the end of Octoberish to file with the Speaker. Then, of course, it's over to the Legislature to enact legislation amending the boundaries prior to the next election.

We filed our interim report on May 23, and the journey we took analytically is this. We looked at the Statistics Canada population for Alberta based on the census last year, the 2016 census, and it tells us that Alberta has 4,062,609 people. We divided that by 87 and got 46,697. That's our average population size. That doesn't mean that every constituency should be that exact size. In fact, none of our recommendations would leave a constituency at exactly that size, but that's the starting point for the rest of the journey. According to the process set out by the Supreme Court of Canada and our own Alberta Court of Appeal way before I was sitting on the Court of Appeal, we start with that. Then the next step is to compare that average population with the actual population in every riding.

6:55

I'm going to use Airdrie as an example because the map is nice and big and it's right at the back of the room and I can read the numbers. It tells us that the population in Airdrie now is 64,609 people, or 38 per cent above the provincial average. You can see how much it's grown. It's grown by 23,000 people in the last eight years. It was just 2 per cent above the average last time, which is 40,000 some-odd, and now it's all the way up to 38 per cent. We know that we have to make a recommendation reducing the size of Airdrie, essentially making two constituencies there, but there are not enough people to make two complete constituencies, so that raises other issues. The legislation does not permit us to have a riding more than 25 per cent above or below the provincial average. That, of course, is well above 25 per cent above the provincial average.

Step two: compare the actual population in a riding to this average and then decide whether it's necessary to make a recommendation to change the size of the constituency to ensure continued effective representation by its MLA in the future.

The act sets out criteria for that. The first criterion, an important one, the one that we've heard most about, I think, in our consultations is common community interests and organizations. We're told to try to avoid cutting up common communities of interest. This isn't just physical towns, villages, and cities, but it's also groups of the same ethnicity, groups who earn their living in the same way, people who have the same historic connection to different parts of the province. We all belong to a variety of communities of interest, and we're to try to respect them. That doesn't mean you can't have more than one community of interest in a riding. In fact, each riding has lots of communities of interest as well, but we shouldn't do it without realizing it or intentionally cut them up when that can be avoided.

Along the same lines, we're told: don't cut up neighbourhoods in Edmonton or Calgary, specifically those two big cities, if we can avoid it. I have here, for example, the map of all the neighbourhoods in Calgary. You have a lot of neighbourhoods. In our work we naively at the beginning thought: well, we'll just be able to draw this line. We discovered that we couldn't achieve this goal completely. Some of your neighbourhoods are much bigger than 46,697 people, so there was no choice but to put them between two constituencies. Many of your neighbourhoods are larger than cities in Alberta. It's phenomenal. That was our second goal, but we did experience some limitations in achieving it.

The next criterion is municipal boundaries. Our report does not cross any city, town, or village boundary in the province except for Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, and Medicine Hat. Those three cities are special cases because they have populations that are too great for one constituency but not great enough for two constituencies. With our recommendations Airdrie will join that select company and will have two constituencies, either a completely city constituency and a blended constituency of part city, part country or two blended constituencies. Those are the solutions that are available. But otherwise we haven't made ridings that take in part of Calgary and part of the area outside Calgary or Edmonton and part of the area outside Edmonton. In our first round of public hearings everyone who spoke on this issue was unanimous in not wanting to have these blended constituencies if we could avoid them, so we were able to achieve that result in our recommendations.

Another criterion for our work is to try to follow natural boundaries as borders of constituencies if possible. These are major highways and rivers. Some of our constituencies have really wiggly boundaries at one edge or another. Well, that's always a sign that it's following a river. I think that the legislators thought that if we use well-known features, people would more easily be able to remember the boundaries of their constituencies, so we've used that when they're available.

We've also considered growth projections and not in the sense of: this neighbourhood is projected to grow 10 per cent next year and this one to shrink. No. Generally we've looked at areas of the province where there's been very high growth in the last eight years, and we've looked at areas of the province where the growth rate has fallen below average. There's virtually no constituency in Alberta that didn't grow somewhat in the last eight years, but some of them have grown at a much faster rate than others. We considered that areas that have grown at a much faster rate and are likely to continue to grow because they have lots of land still to be developed into single-family housing are more likely to continue to grow above the provincial rate. In areas where there has been no development and where the average age of the population is very high, it's less likely that their growth rates will be above the provincial average in the next go-around. It hasn't been statistical, but it's been a trend. Our approach in Calgary is evidence of this.

The core constituencies in Calgary we've left a little bit above provincial average because they're not expected to grow above the provincial average growth rate because there are limited opportunities to grow. They have to grow through infill or through high-rise building, but they just can't build subdivision after subdivision. The areas like Calgary-South East, which has grown so much and where they're building houses, I'm sure, as we speak here right now: we're thinking that that's likely to continue to grow and that those areas will continue to be built out over the next eight years and that population will continue to be added there. That's how we've dealt with growth rates.

We've also considered the goal of designing constituencies to facilitate ease of communication between the constituent and the MLA, between the MLA and the constituent in regard to issues and what's happening, and that's another factor.

Finally, we're to consider public input, and we've heard a lot of good suggestions in our hearings this morning and this afternoon about constituency boundaries, the ones that we've recommended, and very helpfully people have looked at our recommendations and said: you know, this doesn't make sense because this neighbourhood is traditionally with us and the neighbourhood that you've given us is traditionally with the constituency below, so could you just switch them? We've heard lots of that, so we'll certainly be looking at those suggestions on a go-forward basis

when we conclude our deliberations after we're finished this set of public hearings.

I should mention that there's a minority report found in appendix A of our interim report. Mrs. Day has a different view. She made a different recommendation for how we should deal with the adjustment of constituency boundaries in Alberta, and I leave it to you to read that and to see her good work in that regard.

Our goal is to prepare a final report. It says October 24, but that is wrong; October 23 is our last filing date. We'll file that with the Legislature. Hopefully, that will produce legislation either accepting our recommendations or, you know, making some kind of change. I'm hopeful that they'll all be accepted. That's what happened the last time, so that's a personal goal.

We're delighted that you're here, as I said at the beginning, to participate in this process. I'm going to call on our first registered speaker. Please be aware that *Hansard* is here. They're taking down everything that's said, and they're putting that up in an audio recording on our website. It will be up there in text for people to read if they prefer that within the next couple of days. So everything you say at the mike is taken down, and it will be reported to the public and our website abebc.ca. You can get access to our interim report on the website as well and our maps for the proposed constituencies.

Our first registered speaker, I think, is not here yet. He was here but then stepped out for a moment. But we'll call on the next speakers, Josi Wiebe and Peter Ries. If each speaker could start by giving the name of the constituency in which they currently reside, that would help us out.

Mrs. Wiebe: I'm Josi Wiebe, and I'm a member of Calgary-Northern Hills.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Ries: I'm Peter Ries, also a resident of Calgary-Northern Hills.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mrs. Wiebe: Hon. Madam Justice Bielby and members of the commission, good evening and thank you so much for the opportunity to speak to the proposed electoral boundaries. You have such an immeasurably hard task. We've been trying to figure out the challenge that we've had before us, and every time we try to tinker with one thing, it sets off a complete domino effect. So we can only appreciate the tip of the iceberg of what you guys have been working on for many months.

I'm the vice-chair of the Advocates for North Calgary High School, which is made up of residents of the Calgary-Northern Hills communities and Hidden Valley, who recognize the need for a high school within our boundaries and are working with all levels of government and decision-makers toward that end. Our original request to remain as the Calgary-Northern Hills constituency is what we originally purposed to convince you of today.

7:05

At almost 60,000 people strong we are indeed over that 25 per cent population that would be allowable by almost 1,600 people. As we further thought and dug into it, we know that people deserve and are within their rights for their vote not to be diluted so that we can have effective representation in government. Thank you so much for recognizing that and seeing that the north and northeast end of Calgary was in dire need of a new constituency to represent the increase in population over the last number of years and to be in a position to allow for future growth.

In your report it was stated that “no practical option was available to prevent the Deerfoot Trail from bisecting the new constituency of Calgary-North East.” Our submission on June 21, 2017, stated that we would welcome the opportunity to find a better way, and that’s why we are here this evening.

The Chair: We’ve been promised that you’ll produce an entire redistributing of the city for us this evening. Is that so?

Mrs. Wiebe: Actually, we’ve got a little bit of that. I only brought two copies. We’ve prepared a counterproposal which would solve the division of Calgary-North East as well as balance the population of all the ridings where boundaries of the northern ridings could better meet your mandate of respecting community interests, organizations as well as geographical and municipal boundaries.

Calgary-North East was indeed a challenge, but the proposed boundaries join two areas with diametrically opposed viewpoints and constituent need. Areas east of Deerfoot have closer access to schools, especially a high school, hospitals, urgent care, community recreation spaces, and LRT access: all things that are lacking in the communities west of Deerfoot in this riding. It is this disparity which has the west of Deerfoot communities unrepresented even in our federal riding. Both sides of Deerfoot have different municipal boundaries and very clear geographical divides. Besides Deerfoot there is Nose Creek, Stoney Industrial Park, and the airport. Coventry Hills and Harvest Hills are about 12 kilometres away from Skyview Ranch.

For Northern Hills Community Association residents the interim proposal splits our community association into three ridings. Coordinating and communicating with three different MLAs to advocate for our needs as a community would create an unnecessary obstacle and increase the challenge to effect that necessary change with our elected representatives. It’s astounding that a constituency has too many people to remain a single riding but it doesn’t have enough yet to necessitate a high school within our boundaries.

The Chair: I’m going to interrupt and ask a question so I don’t forget to ask it.

Mrs. Wiebe: Yup. Sure.

The Chair: The speaker earlier today said that if we were to split Calgary-Northern Hills as we propose, it would be split between the new ridings of Calgary-North, Calgary-Beddington, and Calgary-North East and that two of those areas already have a high school but the third does not. He was particularly concerned that there would be a reduction in interest by the MLA in the two areas that already have a high school, making it harder for the third area to get a high school. Have I got that right?

Mrs. Wiebe: I would need to really think about those. If I think about Calgary far northeast, yes, they have a high school; south of Beddington, yes, they have a much closer high school, so that would address the Calgary-Beddington with the Country Hills. Then I’m trying to think about the third area, which . . .

The Chair: Is directly north.

Mrs. Wiebe: . . . is directly north of that. Well, there the issue would be that there would be a need for – currently the students who are designated from that Panorama Hills area are designated to the same high school, the same area, as the other residents of Northern Hills whereas the other riding communities are designated to a completely different area of the city, so I think that would be where that challenge would be.

The Chair: Okay.

Mrs. Wiebe: Does that address it?

The Chair: Exactly, yes. Carry on, please.

Mrs. Wiebe: Okay. So we are proposing that the Calgary-North East riding be composed of Coventry Hills, Country Hills Village, Harvest Hills, and Livingston and that Hidden Valley, which includes Hanson Ranch, be added. This would further respect Hidden Valley and Hanson Ranch. They’re actually essentially the same community numbers in the census. They are one, but their addresses have a little bit of division, and they’re in the same community association.

As this proposed riding would be bordered by Nose Creek on the east and south and West Nose Creek on the west side, this would also allow for the riding to be perhaps renamed Calgary-Nose Creek if it pleased the commission to do so. Beddington Trail and Nose Creek as well as a vehicle trap divide the Calgary-Northern Hills communities from all others to the south. There isn’t an accessible direct transportation route to join Hidden Valley much less Country Hills with Beddington. Moving Country Hills into Beddington’s riding does not give that small community with under 4,000 voices a voice with communities south who are mature, established, have the schools, service, and infrastructure that Country Hills and Hidden Valley continue to lack.

Before you on the spreadsheet you’ll see the changes highlighted where communities were moved to balance population numbers per riding and community needs and interests. The results are within your stated population guidelines of plus or minus 25 per cent of 46,698. Also attached, there are the maps of both your proposal and of our counterproposal by riding. We got all of our population numbers from the 2016 census, and in all of our proposals we have made sure that – I remember you saying that your challenge was keeping communities all together without dividing a community, and because we only had the census numbers of the whole community, we used the whole community in all of our response.

I’m open to questions.

The Chair: Thank you. I’m just taking a quick look at your materials. You didn’t remap all of Calgary; you simply mapped the northeast section. Is that correct?

Mrs. Wiebe: North, central, everything from Calgary-Foothills and then over clockwise and all the way to the west down through Calgary-Klein, Calgary-Cross, Calgary – oh, I need stronger glasses.

Mr. Ries: Calgary-Foothills, Calgary-Forest.

Mrs. Wiebe: Down to Calgary-Forest, I think, is as south as we went.

Mr. Ries: The ones that we touched are the ones that you see the documentation, the maps, and the rejiggered numbers for.

The Chair: Right. I mean, I just flipped through it. I haven’t had a chance to look. Our concern – and we remapped Calgary at least three separate times in our deliberations, each one taking over a day, to try to avoid crossing the Deerfoot because we started out with that as a major goal. We found it was impossible. When we went down here and took this extra population and moved it up into Calgary-North East to form the new constituency, it looked at the beginning like Calgary-South East was the place to go because it was almost two constituencies worth of people right there, but we discovered that Calgary-Acadia and Calgary-Fish Creek were so far

under the provincial average that by the time we took care of that, Calgary-South East was pretty much close to par, but up in the northeast there were still a large number of people well over the provincial average.

We'll look at your proposal with interest, absolutely, but we tried and we failed. So if, at the end of the day, you don't see your recommendation become our recommendation, it's because of those problems, because we have to deal with the entire city and the many constituencies that right now have populations well above the provincial average.

Mrs. Wiebe: Right.

The Chair: I'm going to turn to Ms Livingstone to see if she has any questions or comments.

Ms Livingstone: No. I just wanted to clarify. I assume, based on the breakdown of numbers, that you've used the municipal census numbers. Is that correct?

Mrs. Wiebe: The 2016, yes.

Ms Livingstone: Municipal. Okay. Yeah, so that's another difference between what you've done and what we have to do. We have to use the federal numbers, and the methodologies and timing of those are a little bit different. Again, when we were sort of eyeballing some of this stuff, things snapped together a lot easier with the municipal numbers than they did with the federal sometimes. Again, we're absolutely going to go through and look at what you guys did, but don't be disappointed if we can't accept your recommendations because it won't be because we're rejecting them. It will be because the combination of dealing with the rest of the city and using a different set of data may put us in a different position.

But you've certainly given us some additional options, and that's great. We will run through and look at those things. It's particularly helpful as well where you've mentioned where different communities have joint community associations. That's very good information to know, so I appreciate that.

7:15

Mrs. Wiebe: Yeah. Like, Thorncliffe and Greenview: when we were thinking about moving one, we wanted to make sure that they stayed together because we know that they are a community association. I wish that we were privy to the exact data that you guys were as we were doing our . . .

Ms Livingstone: Yeah. So do we. It's unfortunate.

Mrs. Wiebe: But for any constituency that we touched or tweaked, we made sure that we re-added all of the population data. On the spreadsheet, wherever it says "current population," that was the population that we were able to gather through the census on our own. When it says "proposed population," that was the information that we gathered from your interim report, that was on the website. So the proposed population – and then when we have our counterproposal, we tried to get our number. But there again our number is the 2016 census data.

Ms Livingstone: Yeah. It's two different data sets. It is unfortunate that Statistics Canada and the public data don't break it down smaller than Calgary as a whole, but with the mapping programs we use, sort of every time we draw a line, it'll tell us what's in there.

Mrs. Wiebe: That would have been a dream to work with.

Ms Livingstone: Yeah. It was a challenge for us as well to figure out what a community was . . .

The Chair: It's not that easy. I mean, it sounds great in principle, but it takes forever to actually do that calculation. It's very precise when you do get it. Mr. McLeod has become an expert at it. He is our assistant cartographer.

Ms Livingstone: Yeah. But the way I just said, "Draw a line": that's, like, a 45-minute exercise.

The Chair: Okay. Ms Munn, any comment?

Ms Munn: We struggled with this because we understand about communities of interest on either side of the Deerfoot and tried very hard not to have to create a constituency that crossed the Deerfoot. We did it with municipal numbers – it worked out really well – the two of us from Calgary, and then when the cartographer got a hold of it and put in the federal numbers, it was very bizarre.

Mrs. Wiebe: Can you explain why the federal numbers are so different?

Ms Munn: I think they were done a year apart, and I think that the methodology of the municipal census is different from the methodology of the federal census. We're required to use the most up-to-date federal numbers. That's in the legislation. Those numbers came out on February 8, 2017. By that time the municipal numbers, done with a completely different methodology, were at least a year out, and the population growth in the north and the northeast – you know because you live there – changed dramatically. I couldn't believe it myself when I saw the difference.

Mrs. Wiebe: Yeah, because the same houses are on the same streets with . . .

Unidentified Speaker: The same people.

Mrs. Wiebe: . . . many of the same people, and then, yes, there'd be an increase or, yes, there would be movement.

The Chair: I also suspect – and I don't want to accuse the Calgary folks who did the municipal census of this – that municipalities seem to be motivated to have as many people as they actually have because perhaps they get grant money or whatever based on per capita or what have you. The federal government is much less likely to count people who are in any way not permanent residents, so the shadow population is excluded. People living in the camps in Fort McMurray or the military bases who have permanent residences elsewhere are excluded. I suspect that with the municipal censuses some of those people are added in. There's not quite the religious zeal in identifying them and excluding them. But that's just anecdotal.

Mr. McLeod, any questions?

Mr. McLeod: No. I just would like to make a comment. Thank you very much for the detail here. This is really going to help a lot. But as my fellow commissioners have said, some of the maps that you've drawn in here – we've also had a couple of MLAs from those constituencies, that are doing something quite different from what you're proposing. I'm just saying that we take it all in, but this is something that we've got to look at. We'll take all the input and try to put it together, and hopefully it'll work out.

I'd really like you to answer one question, though, because I do this all the time. Do you think that only one MLA is good or lobbying three to get your high school? If you have three voices

instead of only one, do you think it works better? Is that a better rephrase?

Mrs. Wiebe: Yes. Personally, when I'm looking at the particular portion of those voices that those three voices would be, I don't think that it would be effective for three, but I do see value in two.

Mr. McLeod: I'm not trying to put personalities in here at all. I'm sorry. That was not my intention.

Mrs. Wiebe: No, no. That wasn't what I was meaning either. When we were looking at, like, taking Country Hills out, that small portion of the community would be such a small voice for a high school versus when we keep Country Hills, Coventry Hills, Harvest Hills together more as one. Then if we had to split, having Panorama Hills out there as a separate constituency having those – sorry. When meaning two voices in the Legislature, you know, asking for a high school, I feel like that would be more effective than having 20,000 people or 15,000 people asking one MLA, 10,000 people or 4,000 people asking another MLA, and another 25,000 people asking a third MLA.

Does that answer your question better? Not quite?

Mr. McLeod: Yes, it does. I've asked this throughout the whole process because I really would like to know. As the mayor of the village of Acme, with only 656 people, if I had three or two people to go to or one, I'm definitely still going to go after all of them and say: come on; you know, produce here. Then we have a regional core operation group that we deal with in our region, and we do the same thing. Then we expand that, and we still go more. We have a number of MLAs that we always go after because that's just the way we are. I'm one of these guys that doesn't go, actually, to the MLA. I go to the minister. To hell with it. I just find out – I go to the top and get kicked back down.

Commissioner Day.

Mrs. Day: Are you quite done?

Mr. McLeod: Oh, I think so. I'm on my soapbox. It's been a long day.

Mrs. Day: I just wanted to thank you from the granular, ground level, knowing your communities, the work you put into this. This is really valuable information for us. I just want to expand on one question, and that was that I thought I heard you say that you tried to keep community associations together in one block. For example, our proposal, your proposal, this proposal kept a or several community associations all together. Is that what I heard you say?

Mrs. Wiebe: It kept the Hanson Ranch-Hidden Valley community and community association together although it did impact the Northern Hills Community Association. It is not completely together, but it kept the majority of the Northern Hills Community Association together with the exception of Panorama Hills, which there was no way for us to remain – as the numbers say just, you know, 60,000 people, some piece had to leave that puzzle.

Mrs. Day: Thus, you feel our pain.

Mrs. Wiebe: Huh?

Mrs. Day: Thus, you feel our pain. I get it. I appreciate it.

Mrs. Wiebe: Yeah. That community association did get – Panorama Hills as a community entity is intact, and it would just be

a part of that Calgary-North riding as a large block of that constituency.

Mrs. Day: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Thanks very much.

Mr. McLeod: Thank you.

Mrs. Wiebe: Thank you.

Oh. Sorry. If you would prefer to have an e-mailed copy of any of this data – I realize we only brought two paper copies.

Mr. McLeod: Sure. You met Aaron, the clerk, on the way in. Could you please send it to him?

Mrs. Day: That probably is a good idea.

Mrs. Wiebe: Certainly.

Mr. McLeod: Okay. Thank you very much.

7:25

The Chair: All right. Our next registered speakers: Peter Brown and Stephen Utz. Are you the folks with the PowerPoint presentation?

Mr. Brown: We are, yes.

The Chair: Okay. I'm going to perhaps disappoint you, but – I've read it – it's going to take more than five minutes to play, so I don't think it's fair to the other people who are here to make them wait through yours, which will take, I'm guessing, 15 minutes by the time we're all finished. If you don't mind, I'm going to put you at the bottom of the list. We're definitely interested in seeing it. I've already read through your slides, but I don't want to hold up everybody else here.

Mr. Brown: Madam Justice, I just did a timing – it's four minutes and 30 seconds – in my office today. It will not be over five minutes. That I can guarantee you.

The Chair: I'll hold you to that.

Mr. Brown: You will.

Thank you for mentioning Airdrie so prominently in your opening remarks. We much appreciate it. My name is Peter Brown. I'm the mayor of the city of Airdrie. Accompanying me is Stephen Utz, our community growth manager. Obviously, we appreciate all the work that the commission has done to date, and as the previous speaker said, we don't envy your position moving forward.

We've prepared a few slides for your consideration this evening, and we're going to discuss some of the advantages of the proposal and answer any questions you might have when we're finished.

If we'd hit slide 1. I think it's just a number. Oh. Stephen, I don't know how to work that. I'm the mayor, and I don't know how to work that.

To begin with, we would like the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission to know that the population of the four municipalities in the northeast Calgary region – that is, Rocky View, Cochrane, Airdrie, and Chestermere – is approximately 134,496, based on the most recent local census data. This excludes the portion of Rocky View dedicated to the proposed Banff-Stoney electoral area. Divided by three, the regional population has the ability to create three electoral districts that would have an average population of 44,832. This represents over 96 per cent of the target population of 46,697 set out by the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission.

With the urban population of Airdrie alone representing almost half of the regional population, we recognize that an effort must be made to divide the population of Airdrie between multiple ridings to create an approximate population balance within the northeast Calgary region. This was indeed something the Electoral Boundaries Commission had also concluded as part of their interim recommendations.

In collaboration with neighbouring municipalities we have developed the following potential boundaries for your consideration here tonight. Cochrane-Rocky View West: this riding includes all of Cochrane along with all of wards 7 through 9 in Rocky View county and as much of ward 6 in Rocky View county as was possible while still keeping the proposed riding geographically contiguous. This revised riding has a population of approximately 41,662.

Airdrie West: this is primarily an urban riding mirroring Airdrie's municipal boundaries on the north, west, and south. The east boundary was placed along the QE II highway. This riding has a population of 46,923.

Airdrie East-Rocky View East-Chestermere: this riding is comprised of residents from two urban municipalities and one rural municipality. This riding has a population of 45,911.

The EBC should note that the area south of the Bow River on the southeast side of Calgary is proposed to be merged with the Highwood electoral boundary. The existing Highwood electoral boundary is geographically connected. It contains the largest adjacent urban area, Okotoks, and has a current population of 45,431, which is just less than the ideal number proposed by the commission. Adding this geographic area should help create the ideal population for this riding.

Our collective proposal creates three ridings with approximately one-third of the region's population in each one, as can be seen by the map on the screen. It aligns much more closely with the existing municipal boundaries and helps to create ideal population counts for the Highwood electoral boundary to the south.

Slide 7. The proposal has several key advantages: one, it divides the regional population equally between the three proposed districts; includes Rocky View in all the district names; alleviates Cochrane's previous concerns, which were very relevant from their perspective, about the Airdrie population that would be within their riding; balances the population of Airdrie and Chestermere on the east side of the greater region; and brings the Highwood district almost perfectly in line with the population that the commission is looking to achieve. We've been working collaboratively with our neighbours developing this proposal, having reached out to the sitting members of the provincial Legislature. We didn't get an endorsement from the reeve of Rocky View. However, they were aware that, unfortunately, we didn't have time to get an endorsement from their council, but they did like the fact that their name was mentioned. They weren't endorsing us per se, but they were certainly pleased with what we came up with. This is what we've endorsed with Airdrie city council, and we had the town of Cochrane as well. Their council has endorsed this proposal.

I'd like to thank the commission for listening. I hope you'll take some of these recommendations to heart and that there may be an opportunity to make some slight changes.

I don't know if we have a minute left for Stephen. If we don't . . .

The Chair: One minute.

Mr. Brown: One minute. Stephen, whenever you're ready.

Mr. Utz: Thank you, Madam Justice. I think the only thing I would mention here is that we were trying to see if it was possible to look

at the existing municipal jurisdictions and with the population create some electoral boundaries based on that. I know you mentioned in some of your opening remarks about the impacts of growth and the fact that some ridings are growing much faster than others. I think it's relevant to note that I was previously a planner with the town of Cochrane before coming to the city of Airdrie. We wrote the growth management strategy in the town of Cochrane as well as being involved in the Dillon growth study being done in the city of Airdrie.

Our growth is outpacing the provincial average significantly, so when one looks at what's going to happen over the next 10 and 20 years, positioning the boundaries in this fashion and creating an urban riding, in particular for the west side of Airdrie, it sets up very well for the future in terms of where the growth is most likely to occur, in particular the hot spots of Cochrane, Airdrie, and Chestermere, and allows for the possibility that someday with that shrinking that happened, as you say, in the urban areas – and they will continue to shrink in places like Cochrane and Chestermere – they would eventually in the longer term be able to have their own constituency because their growth outpaces that of the provincial average. Airdrie would potentially get multiple within its own urban boundaries, and there would be an opportunity to create rural boundaries that would take in the rest of the geographic contiguous area.

With that, Madam Justice and members of the commission, I'll conclude.

The Chair: Thanks. I'll ask the first question. Your proposal replaces a blended riding of the west part of Airdrie with the town of Cochrane with a blended riding with the east part of Airdrie with the city of Chestermere. Why is that going to provide more effective representation to the residents than the proposal of the EBC? I'm not being defensive, but, I mean, that's the test that you have to meet here to convince us.

Mr. Brown: Stephen?

Mr. Utz: Madam Justice, I could speak to that in part, certainly. When we look at where the growth, in particular, is likely to occur for Airdrie, most of the growth is going to occur in the west and southwest. Recently, as of May, our council endorsed two new growth areas, in the north and in the west areas of Airdrie. Most of that growth is going to occur on the west side. Eventually you'll run into the problem of too much growth on Airdrie's west. With Cochrane and that population it becomes unbalanced whereas on the east side it's relatively stable. There are growth areas there, but they more so match with that of Chestermere, so there is an opportunity to balance that way.

In addition, the highway line itself creates a bit of a boundary. Cochrane itself has also grown quite well. When you look at its population, according to its local census at 26,320, it's outpaced what the growth management strategy expected. It's already three years ahead in its growth. In terms of that and in terms of shrinking that geographic contiguous area, setting up for it now makes that much more effective. Cochrane would eventually be in a position to need its own. Having two MLAs with the highway line as the boundary helps address one of the issues that Airdrie is concerned about, which is getting highway interchanges and improvements along that highway. In particular, we have 65,000-plus people in the current situation. They only have two full interchanges on the highway.

Those are some of the considerations.

The Chair: Okay. Just as a supplementary here, in some of the written submissions there was concern expressed that it would be

unfair to the western part of Airdrie to be joined with Cochrane because Cochrane would have almost twice as many people in the blended constituency as Airdrie. But Cochrane is only a town. Chestermere is a city, a brand new city but a city. You seem willing to take that risk to have part of your city combined with another city versus merely being combined with another town. That raises issues in my mind as to why it would be better to be combined with a city than a town.

7:35

Mr. Brown: Sure. I can take a stab at it. From the perspective of Chestermere if you look at the way it was set up before, we were actually Airdrie-Chestermere not too long ago, so I guess that would be relative in my mind. It was interesting with Cochrane's perspective. They were concerned even though we had less population base than what's been proposed. They were very concerned that Airdrie would have two MLAs and that their issues wouldn't be addressed. I think we've sort of got the best of both worlds. Even though Chestermere is a city, in Cochrane I see much higher growth in the coming years than the Chestermere area. No disrespect to Chestermere, but Cochrane's been growing significantly. They even outpaced us this year, I believe. I haven't seen their most recent census results, but I don't think it's realistically an issue.

I heard the mayor earlier talking about three versus two. I'm with him. The more, the merrier speaking on behalf of your community. I don't feel that it would be detrimental to Airdrie's interests.

The Chair: All right. Thanks.

I'm going to then ask my fellow commissioners. Mrs. Day?

Mrs. Day: Thank you for your presentation tonight and the thought you put into this. I am curious. You mentioned solving some of the Highwood riding. Are you including Okotoks and High River in that Highwood riding when you talk about leaving the bottom part to them, below the Bow?

Mr. Utz: Through the Chair to address the question of the commission member, when I looked at the riding, from what I could tell, most of the area that was south that was proposed to be merged was a rural area that didn't have a significant population base. Okotoks was already in the other, adjacent riding. The population base within that area we wouldn't expect to be more than a few thousand, so it could be considered over. However, I will mention that when I stepped in the room this evening and saw the population you have for Little Bow, that may be more population deficient. We're flexible in that.

We just thought that the Bow River forms one of those natural boundaries that the commission mentioned. It also happens to be the southern boundary of Rocky View county, which is a municipal jurisdiction, so it might provide a logical opportunity to provide some population into a rural area that may need more population since the east side of Rocky View has communities such as Langdon, that are growing quite quickly, similar to Chestermere, Airdrie, and Cochrane.

Mrs. Day: Okay. The second question. I know from my past experience as a county councillor that you had a regional collaboration that included Chestermere and the Rocky View county and Airdrie. Is that part of the reason there seems to be a good fit for you with Chestermere?

Mr. Brown: Well, we haven't had an endorsement from the Chestermere council, I don't believe. Sorry; I have to ask to defer on this, Madam Justice.

I will comment, though, and I guess it defers back to your earlier question. With the coming of the growth management board, the collaborative piece and the ability to work together to effectively, efficiently bring forward the services that our communities need in a manner that works for everyone, I think, will eliminate the issue of towns versus cities and everything else because the municipal politicians will be pushing the agenda and then will be moving on to the provincial levels in a collaborative way, saying, "This overpass or this needs to be funded first," whatever the transportation issue is, if that's utility corridors, whatever they might be. I think it's just going to make it a lot easier across the board.

This may not be perfect the way we've proposed it, but we think it's the best alternative. In speaking to some of our community members – you may have received some letters from people that live in the community. I'm not sure, but the consensus we've heard so far has been very good. We haven't heard anyone since our council supported and endorsed what's being recommended tonight.

The Chair: Just to be clear, the city of Cochrane endorses this, but the city of Chestermere does not?

Mr. Brown: I don't believe we heard back from the city of Chestermere.

The Chair: Okay, but Cochrane does endorse it?

Mr. Brown: Yes. The city of Chestermere has all the information, as does Rocky View county. They just haven't had the time to get it to council. It was summer vacation and everything else.

The Chair: All right. Thank you.

Mr. Brown: Thank you

The Chair: All right. Ms Livingstone?

Ms Livingstone: I just have one clarification and question. You guys use municipal census data for your calculations, right? Okay. Just because we've noticed some differences, what's the population of Airdrie from your municipal data?

Mr. Utz: Through Madam Justice to answer the question of the commission member, the most recent number of our census was 64,922. We recognize, as you suggested, there may be some slight differences between the local census and the federal, but I'll give you an example. The Rocky View population according to their 2013 census was approximately 39,500. According to the 2016 federal census it's about a thousand difference. I would suggest that most of that growth would be in the Springbank area, which is actually in a different riding. So the impact on the differences is relatively low.

Ms Livingstone: Great. Thank you.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. McLeod: Just one question. The boundary on your proposal is the same boundary that we had, which was the Rocky View county line, as I recall. Wasn't it? Is that the county line?

Mr. Utz: Through Madam Justice to address the question and commission member, no, it's not completely. We tried to follow your boundary lines in some respects, recognizing that you would be able to make the adjustments. As you've mentioned before, you have that tool to be able to do that. We would suggest that you'd

want to do that in as many circumstances as possible, pull in as much of Rocky View county as possible in order to keep the municipal jurisdictions, but we do recognize that within Rocky View county there are situations like Crossfield and Irricana, where the boundary line goes around that, and you may not be able to do that for population reasons. It's whatever you can grab that's geographically contiguous that goes across that sort of northern line and pulls in what is existing for Rocky View county that we would recommend. We leave it, obviously, to your discretion to be able to do that.

Mr. McLeod: We could grab a lot of things, but it won't quite work.

Thank you.

Ms Munn: Well, this is a very thoughtful presentation that I think takes into account the concerns of the commission. I'm glad to see that you have consulted, and it's indicated that there's agreement amongst other people involved and other areas involved. I'm very pleased to see this work. Thank you. I know it's a lot of work.

The Chair: Okay. Thanks very much for coming along. We love maps. I've been telling everybody that. It's a little late for the people in the room if they haven't brought maps, but it's so much easier to see a picture than understand just words in the absence of a picture.

Mr. Brown: Absolutely. Thank you very much.

Mr. Utz: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

All right. Our next registered speaker, Scott Eden.

Mr. Eden: Hello. I'm Scott Eden, and I reside in the Calgary-Lougheed riding. Thank you very much for the opportunity to come and present on behalf of our community association. I'm the president of Woodcreek Community Association, which is made up of the Woodbine and Woodlands communities. The communities reside on the northern border of Fish Creek park, south of Anderson. The new proposed ridings would have our communities relocated into the Calgary-Glenmore riding as opposed to the Calgary-Lougheed riding. It is the wish and view of our residents within our communities to remain in the Calgary-Lougheed riding.

A few reasons for this. Although the natural border would appear to be Fish Creek park to the south of us, that area of the park is very much a recreational use area, both by our communities as well as the communities bordering the southern end of the park. A more stunning barrier is Anderson Road on the north. With Anderson Road we have a lot less interaction with the communities going north of that whereas we actually as a community association have quite a bit of interaction with communities on the southern side of Fish Creek park.

One of the proposed reasons for the changes is the new community of Providence coming onboard. Providence is many years out before that ends up getting built out. For a number of the projections associated with Providence, some of the projections have been as high as 30,000 coming in for those. When you take those types of numbers and add them into the current ones, it would stand to reason that somewhere down the line there would have to be some other adjustments made regardless of when that comes in.

Based upon those reasons, we believe that keeping the Woodlands and Woodbine communities within the Calgary-Lougheed riding would still fit within the plus or minus 25 per cent number and provide some room for growth and the start of the build-out of that new community. Outside of that community is

landlocked more to the Tsuut'ina Nation in other areas, so there isn't a lot of area in there for additional growth beyond that one community.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to hear us out.

The Chair: Do you have an idea of the total population of Woodbine and Woodlands together?

Mr. Eden: I believe it's around 11,000 based upon the municipal data.

7:45

The Chair: So that would be 22 per cent maybe? And if we added that to Calgary-Lougheed's already 8 per cent below, that would change that to 14 per cent above. You say that there's growth happening in Calgary-Lougheed, but your proposal would leave it well above the average population, and our philosophy has been to try to leave growing communities below if possible.

Mr. Eden: Right. But the growth for the new area, Providence: some of the information we have is close to a decade out on that, so we're looking long term for that growth to happen. At the same time, when we're looking at it from a natural boundaries standpoint, it is the feeling of our residents that Fish Creek park is not the natural boundary there. Anderson, I guess, is not really natural, but Henderson Road is the actual primary boundary.

The Chair: Okay. If we take 11,000 people out of Glenmore, that's about 25 per cent of the constituency there, so they would be close but not right at the maximum limit to be allowed below. The result of your submission would be that in the next provincial election votes in Lougheed would be about one-third less effective than votes in Glenmore. In other words, an MLA could be returned by only three voters in Glenmore for every four voters who would be required in Lougheed. Why is that a good deal for your residents?

Mr. Eden: Our residents more or less are looking along the lines of wanting to remain within the community areas that they're actually involved with and work with, so it was based upon a slightly different set of criteria versus the pure numbers of the voting effectiveness.

The Chair: Did you tell them about that voting differential?

Mr. Eden: That has come up in some of the conversations, to my knowledge.

The Chair: Have you thought about what could be moved into Glenmore to make up for that dramatic underpopulation that you're proposing?

Mr. Eden: No, we have not. We were just looking at it strictly from our own community perspective.

The Chair: Okay. Mr. McLeod?

Mr. McLeod: No, I think I'm all right this time.

The Chair: Ms Livingstone?

Ms Livingstone: Yeah. Just one question from me. You were making reference to the Providence development, which is sort of on the far southwest or was proposed for the far southwest of Lougheed, but isn't there high-density development going on in the old Shawnee Slopes golf course on the northern side of that proposed boundary?

Mr. Eden: There is some development going into there as well, but I do not have the numbers for that.

Ms Livingstone: Okay. Thanks.

The Chair: Ms Munn?

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

The Chair: Mr. McLeod has a question.

Mr. McLeod: Sorry. The new ring road: what impact will that have on you?

Mr. Eden: The ring road is farther south than we are. As well, it runs between our community and the Tsuut'ina Nation on the west side of us. So other than traffic going by us for the ring road, there's not much of an impact in that.

Mr. McLeod: But you will have access to the ring road, probably, from your communities going west, right?

Mr. Eden: Yes.

Mr. McLeod: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

All right. The next registered speaker is Paul Frank.

Mr. Frank: I live in the current community of Calgary-Northern Hills. Madam Justice, members of the commission, thank you for allowing me to present today. My name is Paul Frank, and I have lived and grown up most of my life in the area, the new areas you're proposing of Calgary-North and Calgary-Beddington. I grew up there, went to school, lived, and now work downtown and live in those areas.

Now, when the proposals first came out and I was looking at Calgary-North specifically, I myself did have difficulty and in talking to other people about the division in Evanston because the sort of west-north boundary cuts Evans Ridge into the other Calgary-Foothills riding. When you look at it in more detail, I would appreciate that it's probably because of the expansion that's going to happen north of Evanston and also happening on the other side of Livingston, so there's lots of expansion going there. I appreciate that you have to have some division somewhere, but part of Evanston, specifically Evans Ridge, has gone into the Foothills area. Looking at Calgary-North, I appreciate the way it is.

The other thing that must be interesting is that Panorama Hills is probably the largest community in Calgary. Really, Northern Hills right now is comprised of Panorama Hills and Evanston. It's only two communities. There will be, we expect and have been hoping for for a long time now, a bridge over Stoney Trail, 14th Street to connect the two communities, and it really will be a connector between the two communities when that's built, hopefully in the next few months or years.

Also, with regard to Beddington, growing up in the area, I think the division is relatively good. Hearing the first presenters, my concern would be the same as theirs in putting Country Hills into there. It's not a natural association with Calgary-Beddington, but again I appreciate: where do you put it, and how else do you change the boundaries around it? There's another part of Country Hills just north of Beddington Trail. It's, of course, not a natural to be put into a Calgary-Beddington proposal, but I accept that changing that will have effects on the other boundaries around there. Generally speaking, I agree. Just being a resident a long time, growing up in the area, both of the titles are reasonable, Calgary-North and

Calgary-Beddington, which makes sense because it's the biggest community in that proposed jurisdiction.

With those comments, I'd like to move to a suggestion looking at Calgary-Airport. It's just the title change that I'm suggesting. As you can appreciate, no one lives at the airport, or they shouldn't, generally speaking, so it won't connect you to a community. For example, if you're in that area, you're in Martindale and you're saying: hey, you're part of Calgary-Airport. My suggestion on that is to actually rename it Calgary-Bhullar. Manmeet Bhullar passed away in 2015 after being an MLA from 2008 to 2015. That touched on his riding, that new proposal, but more importantly the new Manmeet Bhullar school, which is to open this year, is in that Calgary-Airport riding. I think that makes a lot of sense. He was, of course, a minister in the government, a sitting MLA when he passed away, and he does have connections to that community. Subject to, of course, the family accepting that, that would be my suggestion to the commission, renaming Calgary-Airport to be Calgary-Bhullar.

Thank you. Subject to your questions, that's my presentation.

The Chair: Sure. I'll just respond on that last point. We received a number of submissions on the first go-around suggesting we name Calgary-Greenway after Mr. Bhullar, and we adopted and approved among us a list of principles for naming that included: don't change names if you don't have to.

In regard to naming ridings after people, we decided that for any riding that had to be renamed, we wouldn't rename it after a person. It could confuse people new to Calgary, new to democracy, as to what the purpose of that was. We thought that the school was perhaps a better memorial for Mr. Bhullar. For 50, 60 years there'll be kids saying, "I went to Bhullar," right? In eight years this riding could change. It probably will and could be renamed again. It's not as lasting a memorial. That was just our approach, but thank you for your input. Most of the people who've complained about Calgary-Airport, which was my idea, want to go back to Calgary-McCall. What do you think about that?

Mr. Frank: Yeah. Calgary-McCall could work in the sense that it's that area and that's the name of the area. I don't know if it's going to be McCall for much longer. I mean, it's McCall golf course or whatever that area is. It's industrial. It's a challenge when you're naming any of these, when you name it after a community in the community. On the federal level Calgary Rocky Ridge in the northwest is one community out of probably seven, and when you say that you're in Tuscany and you say that you're in Rocky Ridge, there's some confusion there. I appreciate that, but you have to name it something.

7:55

The Chair: The McCall neighbourhood is, in fact, no longer in McCall. It wasn't last time either. Apparently, the people who supported it say that it's not named that because there's an industrial park named McCall – nobody thinks about an industrial park – but, in fact, because McCall was an aviation pioneer in Calgary, and there's this long-term association with that heritage. That's just an information piece there.

Mr. Frank: I don't know, Madam Justice, how you name them. I don't know if you can do more than one, Calgary-Airport-McCall or something because there's an association there if it's with the airport. I mean, you wouldn't name downtown Calgary-Tower because, you know, that's not the community, those kinds of things. So there's that challenge.

The only thing I would go back to is using Bhullar's name or that name. It's a little bit different in the sense that he did pass away as

a sitting MLA. You know, there have been lots of other people who were big, prominent community people, but he was a sitting MLA at the time when he passed away, so I do note that for you.

The Chair: Sure. I do appreciate that. And in heroic circumstances.

Mr. Frank: Yes.

The Chair: Mr. McLeod, any questions?

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

The Chair: Mrs. Day?

Mrs. Day: No. Thanks, though.

The Chair: Ms Munn?

Ms Munn: Thank you. No.

The Chair: Ms Livingstone?
Thank you so much for coming.

Mr. Frank: Thank you, Madam Justice.

The Chair: All right. Jamie Kleinsteuber.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Well, good evening, folks. Good evening, Madam Justice and commissioners. Thank you for allowing me to be here in person tonight and have the opportunity to present. I'm Jamie Kleinsteuber, the MLA for Calgary-Northern Hills. I've been told that I've got about five minutes to present, so I'll be brief.

There are a few concerns that I had with the 2016-17 Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission interim report, that was issued, of course, in May 2017, that led me to propose three main changes. When referring to the link between the new proposed riding of Calgary-North East partnering the neighbourhoods of Coventry Hills and Harvest Hills with the communities in the northeast, I had the following concerns. Those were outlined, basically, with school infrastructure. Specifically, Notre Dame high school, Calgary Catholic school district, the CCSD, and the future north Calgary high school area, which is run by the Calgary board of education, the CBE, are both provincially funded school systems, and their source communities are or will be likely within the Panorama, Coventry Hills, Country Hills Village, Harvest Hills, and Country Hills areas. The students in Redstone and Skyview Ranch communities are more oriented to go to the new Nelson Mandela high school in Taradale. So the first point, then, on the school orientation: I don't think that it fits with the neighbourhood to be split over the Deerfoot and with all that commercial zone.

Another point that I had was with community associations. The Northern Hills Community Association serves Panorama Hills, Coventry Hills, Country Hills Village, Country Hills, and Harvest Hills, and it has no immediate connection with communities east of the Deerfoot. The proposed boundary change would split this community association and its political advocacy into three electoral districts. I know that's been up as a subject for debate here tonight as well, but I just think that because of the community association already being sort of oriented to that zone, it would be a little bit – well, just for the sake of the community association, I think it should probably stay within the zone on the west side of the Deerfoot.

A final point on that topic is recreation. Vivo for Healthier Generations is a community hub for Calgary-Northern Hills, and it would be part of the proposed Calgary-North East riding. It has very little connection with Redstone and Skyview Ranch, in my opinion,

and there's too much distance between Coventry Hills, Country Hills Village, and Harvest Hills with the other communities across the Deerfoot, past the airport north commercial district and Metis Trail to the northeast communities as proposed in the riding. Vivo should be closely connected to the communities it serves. Redstone and Skyview Ranch communities are more oriented to go with the Genesis Centre in the Saddle Ridge, Martindale, and Taradale neighbourhoods rather than Vivo in the Coventry neighbourhood. Just within these three organizations I think that the orientation line on the northeast side, the far northeast corner, is kind of more north-south in that corridor versus these community centres being kind of more north-central.

The final point that was added a little earlier this evening. It's something I'll be working on on the side, but there's currently no through transit connection that goes from North Pointe, which is kind of the central hub of Calgary-Northern Hills currently, to Saddle Towne, which is their transit hub. Well, I plan to work on that, but at the same time, as it currently stands, there's no suitable transit without a few connections.

Further suggestions I have to make. Many people that I've spoken to recognize that the current Calgary-Northern Hills population is over the provincial average. I think in some numbers I've seen, it's about 46,000; some, 46,697.

The Chair: It's 59,961 according to the census.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yes, so we recognize that we're over.

The Chair: Over the legal limit.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yes.

The Chair: Something I say usually in other connections.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Hopefully not connected to me.

Anyway, if Calgary-Northern Hills needs to be divided to bring it within reasonable average populations per riding in the city of Calgary, I'd like to make a point that the riding could also be divided east-west along Country Hills Boulevard, much like the current suggestion of north-south along Harvest Hills Boulevard. Country Hills could also be sort of an orientation that could be accepted there, possibly.

The second point I'd like to make is that I've heard anecdotally of a few proposals that suggest that Panorama Hills should be divided in various ways to help make up the difference of other neighbouring ridings. I personally believe that Panorama is a very prominent community, much like others I represent, and it should not be carved up in any way outside the current municipal boundary division that has had it apportioned in the past along the Hanson Ranch, because it's currently cut that way in a different ward. Not that I'm suggesting that Hanson Ranch be separated, but there's a logical boundary there that could be used if the commission needed to shift population to another riding outside of Panorama.

Much like it was suggested earlier this evening, Hidden Valley and Hanson Ranch currently have a common community association as well. I think at one point in their development there was an orientation sort of along that way, that once the communities evolved, I think those blockages were removed, and they now fit in with the community. So Hanson Ranch is very much a part of Panorama, as far as I'm concerned. In fact, I used to live there. But that's sort of a boundary that has been kind of cut on other maps, and I think that could be reasonable.

Outside of that one exception that's about all I have to say. I know you have a difficult task before you. I'm glad I had the opportunity to present here and look forward to the final result this fall.

The Chair: Thanks very much for your comments. I just want to tell you that we spent a good half day trying to divide Northern Hills east-west along Country Hills Boulevard and make it work to avoid crossing the Deerfoot, and we could not do it. We started in the northwest corner and came across. We started in the southeast corner and came up and around. Then ultimately I think we also started in the southwest corner to see if there was some magic formula, but it just didn't work. There was so much growth in Calgary-North East that the ripple effect among the constituencies gave us no choice. It had to cross the Deerfoot somewhere, so that's the result that you see here.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Okay.

The Chair: It may be cold comfort, but at the first round of public hearings the MLA for the constituency immediately south of the new Calgary-North East, I think what we're calling Beddington now – that's probably Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill – came along and said that he didn't mind the Deerfoot in the middle of the constituency. He found it helped him get to areas of his constituency quicker when he was going to events. I don't know whether that will be the case for the new MLA.

8:05

Ms Livingstone: That's not who said that.

The Chair: Somebody said that. I thought it was him.

Ms Livingstone: No.

The Chair: Okay. Somebody said that. An MLA, right?

Ms Livingstone: Yes. From the south.

The Chair: Oh, from the south. Okay. In any event, we tried. Just know that we tried. We've seen some maps here. Other people have tried as well, and we'll certainly go over them, but so far no luck.

Mr. McLeod.

Mr. McLeod: Hanson Ranch: can you describe where that is? I'm looking at the community thing, and I don't see it.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Sure. It's in the corner of Stoney Trail there and Beddington, at that intersection on the east side of that. Beddington to the north side and Stoney Trail to the east.

The Chair: Is it an official neighbourhood?

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yeah. I think so. In the municipal boundaries – and I recognize, too, that you're not necessarily going by those numbers, but . . .

Ms Munn: I think on the municipal city maps it's described as part of Hidden Valley. I was going to ask you a question. I think it's quite clear that its actual and practical orientations are towards Panorama Hills, because it's at Beddington where Hidden Valley Gate goes into Hidden Valley, but on the other side that's Hanson Ranch.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yeah. That's right.

Ms Munn: All of those houses look way more like Panorama Hills than they look like Hidden Valley, right?

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yeah. I think so. Well, the design's a little bit different in that . . .

Ms Munn: Well, they cost about \$100,000 more, too.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yeah.

Ms Munn: I know that area quite well.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yeah. They've got a nice spot in there.

Ms Munn: But I think you're right. I think Hanson Ranch's orientation is towards Panorama, and that's one of the reasons even though it's called Hidden Valley on the municipal communities map.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yeah.

The Chair: Ms Livingstone?

Ms Livingstone: I don't have anything. Thanks.

The Chair: Mr. McLeod?

Mr. McLeod: I'm good now, I think.

The Chair: Mrs. Day?

Mrs. Day: I'm glad he's good.

I'm just curious. I think your community association from the north area did a lot of work. Had you seen their work, and are you endorsing what their proposals were earlier tonight?

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Yeah. They've pointed out – I've spoken to quite a few from the community association. Although I won't endorse anyone specific, I certainly recognize that they've put a lot of effort into what they've put together. I certainly respect them for that, and I think that ultimately it's up to the public to decide how these boundaries are designed. I mean, it doesn't make sense for me as a politician to really kind of outline that, necessarily. I ran on the previous boundaries. The next boundaries are subject to change.

Mrs. Day: Good answer.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: I've certainly been satisfied with being able to represent everybody within that until now.

Ms Livingstone: I guess just one point of clarification: you do actually make the decision, ultimately, as an MLA. We just make recommendations. The Legislature has to pass it.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Okay. I guess that's coming down the pipe. Thanks for the heads-up on that one. Thank you.

See, I learned something today.

The Chair: Thanks very much for coming along and helping out the work of the Electoral Boundaries Commission.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Well, thank you, folks. Have a good night.

The Chair: The next registered presenter is Carla Lloyd. After Mrs. Lloyd we'll take a five-minute break.

Mrs. Lloyd: I will be very short. I'm Carla Lloyd. I work in the constituency of Calgary-Acadia as the constituency assistant. I wanted to speak to some of the changes that you have proposed that we are very supportive of in terms of dealing with constituents.

First, I'd like to thank you for all of the great work. I know everybody's thanking you, but I will, too. We're pleased to see that Southwood is being reconnected; we're really happy with that. We have had a considerable amount of miscommunication with constituents, who are reaching out to our office to get assistance, on who their MLA is. It always feels like a very awkward thing to pass

them on to somebody else even though in the community association newsletter they might see who their MLA is but they happen to live on the other side of the road, so it's somebody else.

We're also happy to see that Riverbend has been moved to another riding. We think that the interests and the natural boundaries of the river and the Deerfoot make their interests much closer to those on the other side of Deerfoot as well, like Quarry Park.

Really, that is most of what I have to say. We're really happy to see the consideration of the equity of the voting weight, and we hope that as you continue to work through all of these proposals, that will stay as an integral part. That's it.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Any questions, Ms Livingstone?

Ms Livingstone: No. Thank you very much. Not a lot of people take the time to come to say that they like what we've done. I appreciate that, though, because it helps us not make a different mistake later. It is actually very helpful.

Thank you.

Mrs. Lloyd: I think it is very confusing for constituents when their community association is divided for different MLAs. It does create confusion, and it does create that awkward: oh, no; this is not your MLA. You feel like you're passing them on. You try to do it as seamlessly as possible, but it's difficult for constituents. They just want someone to help them, right?

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms Munn?

Ms Munn: I don't have any questions.

The Chair: Okay. Mr. McLeod.

Mr. McLeod: Thank you for the compliment.

The Chair: It's always good just before coffee break on a high note, so thank you.

All right. Robert Nelson right after the break. Thank you.

[The hearing adjourned from 8:11 p.m. to 8:21 p.m.]

The Chair: All right. If everyone could sit down, we'll get going again. We only have a few speakers left.

All right. Our next registered speaker is Robert Nelson.

Mr. Nelson: Before I start, I'll just hand out these maps.

Mrs. Day: Sure. Thank you. Nice to see you again.

Mr. Nelson: You, too. There are two maps there, and I'll explain what they're for in a minute.

My name is Robert Nelson, and I am under both the current and proposed maps a resident of Calgary-Glenmore. Before I begin, as has been expressed already, thank you very much for all of the work that you've put in so far and for being here today to hear our thoughts on the proposed map.

The maps that I've handed out to you: the first is sort of a proposal for how some, I guess, issues that I'm going to flag with the current proposal could potentially be dealt with. I will use the disclaimer that the proposal here was created using municipal census numbers. We've already gone over why that can sometimes be not as helpful as one would hope. The one map shows sort of a proposal on how to alleviate some of the problems with the current community boundaries. Then the other map, that has much fewer

lines drawn through it, shows the riding boundaries from the proposal superimposed over the riding boundaries from your proposal just to see where different communities would have been shifted. I'll warn you that, unfortunately, the areas of focus for this tend to jump around a little bit just because I was making notes as I was noticing little things that I did want to mention.

Without further ado, I guess the first thing I would say is that I do very much appreciate that Calgary was given an extra riding under this proposal. Given our population increase, it is very well deserved. The 2017 municipal census came out today, and we grew another 11,000 or 12,000 people in a year. It was very much needed given the population growth.

The first point that I wanted to make was, I guess, that I was disappointed to see the high number of community splits that were contained under this proposal relative to the current map. I believe there were 13 of them. I mean, as is obvious, I worked with the boundaries and numbers at least a little bit in making these, and I do know that it's effectively impossible to not have any community splits. I do feel that 13 is a bit high, and I feel like there are some areas where the splits could be easily eliminated for the benefit of the representation of the citizens. One example of that would be the area where McKenzie Lake and McKenzie Towne under the current proposal are both split partway through. In that circumstance I feel like it would make more sense to have McKenzie Lake in one riding and McKenzie Towne in the other.

The Chair: Which ridings?

Mr. Nelson: I guess that under your proposed boundaries it would make sense to have one, likely McKenzie Lake, in Calgary-Peigan and the other community, McKenzie Towne, in Calgary-Hays. I just say that because while the communities do have similar names, they're actually fairly different demographically. McKenzie Towne was sort of designed as this new urbanist community, sort of a town itself within the city. McKenzie Lake is a lake community. The demographics are actually fairly different there, so it doesn't really make sense to have them both split.

In terms of community association splits as well Calgary-Northern Hills has already been mentioned a fair bit tonight, so I won't go back to that.

But one thing that I wanted to mention from my area of the city was the splitting up of the Chinook Park-Kelvin Grove-Eagle Ridge Community Association. Those three communities are represented by the same association, and as is the problem with Calgary-Northern Hills they are put in this proposal into three different ridings – into Calgary-Elbow, Calgary-Acadia, and Calgary-Glenmore – whereas right now they are all within Calgary-Glenmore.

In terms of the ridings in the northeast I would like to state – and I do appreciate the difficulty with this – that Deerfoot Trail does truly form what I would consider to be a logical riding boundary in the north part of the city. Given what you've said about using the federal census numbers, I do understand that it's likely you won't be able to do it by crossing Deerfoot entirely, but in my opinion, if it has to be crossed in the northern part of the city, it's more appropriate to cross sort of the southern part of the northern part of the city, as the Calgary-Klein riding does in your proposal there. There's much less of a separation between the communities on either side of Deerfoot the further south you go whereas in the north there's a substantial amount of industrial land in between. Also, as you go further south, the demographic differences between the communities on either side of the Deerfoot are not as stark. You're not really putting together different communities of interest.

In terms of riding names there were two riding names that I wanted to comment on. We have already touched on Calgary-Airport. My ideal suggestion for that would likely be a return to Calgary-McCall, as some have mentioned. It does speak to the history of the area specifically, that the airport did at one point used to be called McCall field. If McCall was determined to be a sort of confusing name because of the location of other places with the McCall name, another suggestion that I would have would be Calgary-Saddle Ridge. As much as I usually dislike naming ridings after one community in the area, Saddle Ridge is the largest community in that riding. The whole area – Saddle Ridge, Martindale, and Taradale – falls under the city's Saddle Ridge area structure plan, so it does sort of have that descriptor for the entirety of the residential area that the riding contains.

The other name that I had a suggestion around was Calgary-Forest. I realize that you were trying to not replicate Calgary-Forest Lawn, which is a federal riding name, but Calgary-Forest could potentially be confusing. I mean, there isn't a forest there. Forest Lawn, of course, used to be a town before it was annexed. I do feel like that name would be more appropriate or potentially just returning to a geographically oriented name. It could be appropriate just to call that Calgary-East. Calgary-Forest, I feel, is not very accurate. It's not the best name that could be used for the riding.

I'd just like to conclude with specific points on a few of the ridings that you have put in your proposed map and just offer commentary where I feel like it's necessary.

Starting with Calgary-Acadia, I just wanted to point out – this is falling under the, I guess, topic of how it may not always be wise to uniformly assume that a population, like more inner city parts of the city, will not be increasing as much as the suburbs. That's true in most places, but in Calgary-Acadia, for example, in the community of Haysboro there is currently a proposal to redevelop a shopping centre in the area and put in four 30-storey apartment buildings. Developments like that can have a substantial impact on the population that may not be considered in the current proposal.

In a similar vein, I would like to draw attention to the continually increasing population of the Beltline community in Calgary-Buffalo. As I said, the 2017 census came out today, and that showed that the Beltline had added another 1,200, nearly 1,300 people. Calgary-Buffalo, from my recollection, already has a fairly high population. With the Beltline, which is already a substantial portion of that riding, growing at a high rate, it could potentially move away from what you're trying to do in terms of balancing the populations and accounting for population growth.

Calgary-Bow, just very briefly. I found the inclusion of the Wildwood community there odd. It's on the opposite side of Sarcee Trail from the rest of the riding, and Sarcee Trail does present a fairly natural, as natural as highways are, barrier there. I do feel that Wildwood would continue to be a better fit with the communities like Rossarock, Westgate, and Spruce Cliff on the east side of Sarcee Trail.

8:30

The Chair: Which would be in what constituency?

Mr. Nelson: That would be in Calgary-Currie.

The next comment. For Calgary-Foothills I felt that the population there was potentially not accommodating enough or accounting enough for the future growth in that area. Calgary-Foothills contains a number of communities that are growing rapidly: Nolan Hill, Sage Hill, Sherwood. At least two of those added another 1,000 residents each over the last year, and Foothills is already quite close to the provincial average. I feel like there could potentially be a situation there at the time of the next

redistribution like we currently have with Calgary-South East if the population remains at that level.

For Calgary-Forest and Calgary-Peigan I just wanted to comment briefly that the proposed – I guess it's approved now. There is a future community of Belvedere on the east side of Calgary. It's bisected by 17th Avenue, which is the boundary that you have right now between Calgary-Forest and Calgary-Peigan. I did recognize in your report that an issue that had been discussed or highlighted in some areas was where riding boundaries did not take account future community boundaries. In this case, if Belvedere does begin to develop by the time of the next redistribution, the community will be split in two. I would recommend that, if possible, that should be avoided.

There's a similar potential issue with Livingston, as it's currently in the proposal, being split between Calgary-North and Calgary-North East.

Then, finally – actually, I think that was it. I just looked at my list, and that was it. If you have any questions for me, I'm more than happy to field them. Otherwise, thank you for giving me time to present, and thank you for continuing to do this important work.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. McLeod: That second-last one you talked about, off 17th Avenue S.E. there: what's the name of that going to be?

Mr. Nelson: It's Belvedere.

Mr. McLeod: Is it going to go beyond Stoney Trail? Is it on the other side of Stoney Trail?

Mr. Nelson: Yes. It's on the east side of Stoney Trail there. I'm just looking at the map now, but it would be on the east side of Stoney Trail. If I remember the boundaries correctly, its northern boundary would be approximately 8th Avenue N.E., and it would extend down to 26th Avenue S.E. out to what would probably be 100th Street S.E.

Mr. McLeod: Still within the current city limits, though?

Mr. Nelson: Yes. It's within the current city limits.

Mr. McLeod: Okay. All right. There is kind of a blank space there. I was just wondering about that. Thank you.

The Chair: Mrs. Day?

Mrs. Day: Thank you so much for your work, though. This is very good.

The Chair: Ms Livingstone?

Ms Livingstone: Just one question. You said that we split the community of Livingston. We've been getting people to come up and draw on our maps. I was wondering if you could draw for me where that was that we did that or if you have, like, a road marker that you could give me just so I know where that was.

Mr. Nelson: Looking on this map, Livingston is at the very top, where I have this grey line here. Grey lines in my map-drawing indicate where a community has been split. This grey line at the top represents the split in Livingston. Livingston is the community here. It is bisected by Centre Street, and Centre Street was used as the riding boundary divider, which is how Livingston has come to be divided. Livingston, I do believe, is one of the communities in Calgary that, although undeveloped, is going to be the next to have development, so it's very likely that given the rate that Calgary

communities have been growing, probably a few thousand people at least will be living in Livingston by the time of the next redistribution.

Oh, one other thing that I neglected to mention, which is a little embarrassing because it's about my own riding. I just want to note that there was a presenter previously who talked about how he felt that Woodlands and Woodbine would be a better fit with the communities to their south. I would actually disagree with that. Based on this current proposal for Calgary-Glenmore, because of the riding boundaries on Glenmore Trail and on 14th Street, there are parts of the riding – Lakeview, North Glenmore Park, and Eagle Ridge – that aren't accessible by vehicle unless you drive on the riding boundary, taking you slightly outside of it. That's not the most optimal fit.

As you can see on this map, when I was trying to work with the boundaries, I actually sort of went away from that. I took Lakeview, North Glenmore Park, and Eagle Ridge out of Glenmore and replaced them with communities, Canyon Meadows and Southwood, I believe, which have a sort of better fit with Woodbine, Woodlands as well as Cedarbrae, Braeside, those sorts of communities. Lakeview and North Glenmore Park used to be part of Calgary-Elbow. They were moved into Glenmore in the last redistribution, but they've always sort of had more in common with the communities to their north in Calgary-Elbow. If Calgary-Glenmore does have to be changed, my recommendation would be to look more at the Lakeview, North Glenmore sort of areas rather than at further areas in the south.

The Chair: That would be: look north.

Mr. Nelson: Yeah.

Ms Munn: Did you put numbers to your suggestions?

Mr. Nelson: I did, and unfortunately I did forget to include them on here. I will say that I do remember that they were all within the statutory limits, plus or minus 25 per cent. I believe the highest variation was plus 18.9 per cent, and the lowest was negative 14.4 per cent. I did attempt to do what you had done in your proposal by having higher populations in more central areas of the city, that are less likely to be developing, and putting low populations in the suburbs.

Ms Munn: And you used municipal data?

Mr. Nelson: Yes.

Ms Munn: Okay.

Mr. Nelson: I would have liked to have used the 2017 data, but like I said, that was released today, and I saw it about 10 minutes before I left for here, so I couldn't do that.

Ms Munn: Yeah. This is a lot of work. I know how much work was involved in doing this. Thank you. Food for thought.

The Chair: Next time – because you're young, there will be many next times – do this for the first hearing, okay?

Ms Munn: He did.

The Chair: Oh, did you?

Mrs. Day: He did. I remember.

The Chair: But did you come along and give us this map?

Ms Munn: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. Well, then it's all our fault. Okay. All right. Thanks.

Anybody else have anything?

Mrs. Day: I just wanted to ask for clarity – now, you have these light grey lines. If I put my glasses on, I can actually see them. These light grey lines are where you're saying that communities have been split. Is that what you're saying, then, with those light grey?

Mr. Nelson: Yeah. I guess, just to clarify, on this map that shows the community boundaries, the grey lines are predominantly where community splits existed under the proposal that's come from the commission. As I said, one of the issues in my mind that I tried to address was the level of communities split, so I reunited as many communities as possible. Those lines were left in there just to indicate where there had been a split. The only one that I added was in Martindale, just due to the necessity. There had to be a community split in order to accommodate the growth in those far northeastern communities.

Mrs. Day: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Anyone else?

Okay. Thanks very much.

Mr. Nelson: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Fred Nash.

Mr. Nash: I'll be very short and brief. Your Honour Madam Chair, His Worship, and distinguished commissioners, I'm the proud mayor of beautiful Rocky Mountain House for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre, the proposed Drayton Valley-Rocky Mountain House.

Currently your proposal puts us 17 per cent over, with the number, if memory serves me right, 54,600.

The first thing I want to mention is that I want to personally thank the commission for your first proposed decision on the boundary adjustment, where you kept Clearwater county intact. That, in our eyes, was huge, so we want to thank you for that. But after collaborating with the affected communities on the proposed boundary change to include Drayton Valley in the new riding, we believe the citizens of this new, large electoral riding can best be served by excluding the town of Drayton Valley.

Our suggestion is to cut across the natural boundary division of the North Saskatchewan River there to Boggy Hall and then straight across. See the map. The numbers, when we collaborated with individuals – it's just kind of almost a straight line there. The numbers would get us back in line. The reason and rationale behind that: it keeps Drayton Valley's history, trading partners, culture, and sports intact. They were to make a presentation to you as well.

Rocky Mountain House, Clearwater county: the economy is improving. I have a little map. It'll be on there, the rig count, which I go into quite frequently, and it shows the history. There was a dip in the rig count in Alberta, and we're still only about 30 per cent, but Alberta has more rig activity than all of the rest of Canada combined. Rocky Mountain House has the busiest rig activity in all of Alberta. A major oil and gas company came into the town office to discuss the potential of an additional 400 wells in their area.

8:40

Things like Riverview campground: currently 100 per cent full with, they said, 40 per cent tourism and 60 per cent oil and gas workers. There's a new Rustic River campground, that is 500 proposed sites, and they're doing phases 1 and 2, about 250 in total. This is their second year. They're reporting that they're 80 per cent full.

The landmen are currently negotiating with farmers about 15 miles north of Rocky Mountain House to install wind turbines for environmentally friendly electricity. That's just in the north hills of Rocky.

There are two proposed massive coking coal mines under study to export coal to China for steelmaking. One of them would be 800 permanent employees; the other, 600 permanent employees plus the ripple employment. One has the best economics of all the coal mines in North America, and this is for coal that is used in steel manufacturing, which is one of the elements of modern industry.

Clearwater county has been identified as one of the best, top geothermal reservoirs in commercial development in Alberta. We just had a study from the University of Alberta where we placed Rocky in the third to fifth area as the best for this geothermal.

The Howse Pass connection with B.C. is in the works. A letter from Minister Brian Mason is in the package there. B.C.'s comments were: it's in our long-term strategy; that road, we believe, will connect it, which is, they said, with a five-year timeline, whereas I went to FCM in Ottawa recently, on the 1st of June, and tried to meet with the ministers there to get federal ideas on this, and I have more work to do there.

Our proposal is that with the increased economics of the area, we feel that being 17 per cent over now, we'll be 25 or 30 per cent over by the next time.

The Chair: Fred, if I can interrupt, I know that we did hear this when we heard from the folks from Drayton Valley. If we agreed with your proposed modification, how many people will be taken out of your constituency?

Mr. Nash: My colleagues were to get the numbers because we tried to keep it short. I was to present the future. If I remember the numbers – I'm currently on special chemo medicine, so the numbers may not be a hundred per cent accurate – I thought it was around 6,000 people, 6,500. I think 17 per cent represents about 7,900 people or something like that.

The Chair: All right. So you'd be dropped right down.

Mr. Nash: Yeah. We'd be on par. I know that your mandate is to look at the eight-year future as well, and that's the part that I'm trying to make the presentation on.

The Chair: Right.

Mr. Nash: Questions?

The Chair: All right. Mr. McLeod?

Mr. McLeod: No. I'm going to leave Fred alone.

The Chair: Mrs. Day?

Mrs. Day: Yes. We've had a couple – well, we've had several suggestions and presentations agreeing with your Drayton Valley idea. But if I drop you down now into south of Sundre – there was also some comment about those south of Sundre and the Bergen and Elkton areas, that used to be in Rocky Mountain House. Can you

expand on that? Have you heard any comments? They're now with Banff-Stoney.

Mr. Nash: When I presented in Sundre, Banff-Cochrane was 39 per cent over, I believe. That's where I suggested to go, and you guys went north, which is – we're going to make it work no matter what happens. But one of our biggest problems is that our MLA, that is doing an exceptionally good job, has – I think he puts about 70,000 clicks to 80,000 clicks per year on his vehicle to get to all the constituents, and that windshield time is not very productive. Whatever you decide, we'll agree with, but we believe that it would be better with this future development that's coming in, and we're getting all kinds of indications. Our hotels four years ago were at 100 per cent occupancy for a three-year period. Then they dropped down to 30, to 40 per cent. Now they're up to 50, 60 per cent occupancy. We see the influx of business coming back.

Did I answer your question? Okay?

The Chair: Do you want Bergen, or is it better left where we propose it?

Mr. Nash: Well, yeah.

Mrs. Day: The people south of Sundre from the Bergen, Elkton area that used to be with Rocky have asked to be back in with the Rocky riding. I just wondered if you think that's appropriate as well.

Mr. Nash: I would think that's appropriate. That's the short answer.

Mrs. Day: Okay. That's all I needed to know.

The Chair: It's a hard question for a politician even if you thought otherwise, right?

Mr. Nash: Yeah. Thank you.

The Chair: Ms Livingstone.

Ms Livingstone: Yeah. I just had one quick question, which was just on the specifics of how to take Drayton out. I want to make sure I'm drawing a line in the right place. We're talking sort of south of – oh. You've got a map.

Mr. Nash: I think I handed one out.

The Chair: Here's his map right there.

Mr. Nash: Here's another one. I'm sorry. I apologize for not getting more.

Ms Livingstone: That's okay. I was putting it in the right place, then, south of Lodgepole by Boggy Hall. Okay. Perfect.

The Chair: Okay. Thanks.

Ms Munn: We heard a very similar submission from Glenn McLean, the mayor of Drayton Valley. I'm glad that – well, it sounds like you're co-ordinated on this, and it sounds like the numbers might very well work. Now, for the northern part – where's that map? – you're asking that the line be drawn at Brazeau Dam.

Mr. Nash: Yeah.

Ms Munn: I just want to make sure that's where we've got it, where I've got it on my little picture.

Mr. Nash: Okay.

Ms Munn: Yup. Perfect.

The Chair: All right. Thanks very much. Thank you.

Mr. Nash: Thank you. I know it's been a long day. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mrs. Day: Thank for coming all this way as well. I appreciate your draft.

Mr. Nash: I tried to make it to the other ones in Red Deer and that, but my time schedule didn't allow it. I appreciate you working after hours so I can work after hours.

The Chair: Our pleasure. Thank you.

Ms Livingstone: Thank you very much.

The Chair: All right. Our last registered speaker is Blake Richards.

Mr. Richards: Thank you. Last and certainly least. Thank you for all the work that you guys have put into this. I know how much goes into this process, and I know how difficult the decisions you have to make are. Sometimes you're not very popular, and I appreciate that you're willing to step forward and do the work.

What I want to do tonight was . . .

The Chair: Where do you live, sir?

Mr. Richards: I live in the city of Airdrie, but I'm the Member of Parliament for the riding that's called Banff-Airdrie, so I represent five current provincial ridings and I guess it would be several of the proposed ones as well. I bring a bit of a unique perspective because many people that I would see coming forward are sort of from the perspective of one community. I've got the perspective of a number of them. I also formerly represented some other parts of constituencies, for example the Mountain View area, as well. I can speak from the perspective of several areas.

I know that's part of your job. You can't look at one particular constituency in isolation. In fact, you can't even just look at two or three in isolation. Everything that you do has a domino effect on everything else, and I recognize that.

You know, I looked particularly at the area that I represent. The current ridings would be the Airdrie riding, the Chestermere-Rocky View riding that I represent a portion of, the Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills that I represent a portion of, the Banff-Cochrane riding currently, as well, I represent almost entirely. There have been some significant changes there, but I recognize it's a pinch point, and I recognize that its proximity to Calgary and all the growth in the area make it one of the most difficult and challenging areas for you to deal with.

When I looked at that, I noted that you had recognized that particularly there were some areas where you wanted some feedback. One of them was for the proposed creation of this Airdrie-Cochrane riding, so I'll just speak to that first. You asked the question about whether a single MLA could effectively represent that area, being that its got a blended constituency with a portion of a city and a large town.

8:50

I would argue that the answer to that question is yes. A single MLA could certainly do that. In fact, I don't see any alternative to that possibility. Given the size of Airdrie that is what has to happen, and it is within reason. I mean, if you look at the area that I

represent, you know, I have Airdrie, Cochrane, and a far greater area outside of that, and I'm able to, I believe, effectively represent that. I think if you look at the current Banff-Cochrane riding as an example as well, the Banff-Cochrane MLA has Banff and Canmore, which are also very sizable communities, and a number of other communities, and they're able to do that quite effectively. I don't see there being any challenges with that particular riding. It's not a perfect riding, nor are any of them, but I think what you've done is certainly reasonable.

I noted that the city of Airdrie came forward tonight with an alternate proposal for that area. I wouldn't be opposed to that proposal either. Having said that, I think what it does do is just shift around some of the challenges. It doesn't fix them entirely. The challenges that I see in particular for that area are the communities which I would call sort of the acreage area communities in places like the Sharp Hill and Balzac area, Bearspaw, Springbank. That's where I think I see a lot of the challenges with the current proposal. I don't really have a suggestion as to how you can fix them, and that's why I say that I think what you've come up with is fairly reasonable.

What they've done with the Airdrie proposal is that they've moved Balzac back within a riding that's with Airdrie, which is a reasonable thing because Balzac people do identify with the city of Airdrie as their home, where they do their business, for a large part. What it does is that it takes and creates that same problem for the people sort of north, directly northeast and west of the city of Airdrie, with the proposal that Airdrie has put forward. Those people have always been, you know, included with Airdrie until very recently in terms of the provincial area and have always been with them in terms of the federal area. It moves the challenges around. Same thing goes for the Airdrie-Cochrane alignment. It becomes Airdrie and Chestermere. It doesn't really solve anything. It just changes how it's dealt with. I don't see a problem with either proposal because I think they are as good as it's going to get because of those pinch points, those growth areas, et cetera.

When I look at the Banff-Stoney riding, I do have the same concerns about the area just south of Sundre. I did represent that area. I did grow up fairly near that area as well and spent a lot of my life there, and I can tell you that they certainly would absolutely fit within a riding that includes Sundre rather than one that includes Banff and Canmore. Having said that, I do recognize that you do have the population challenges to deal with there, so I don't think you're talking about a lot of population change there in terms of the percentage differentiation. You may be able to still keep that riding intact. I do see a lot of advantages to that riding.

Certainly, you know, there's always an argument made by the mountain communities of Banff, Canmore, Lake Louise, et cetera, that they would like to be in a riding that's more aligned with their particular interests and needs, and I think this does that.

I also think it's a good thing that you're giving a greater voice to aboriginal communities within one particular constituency with the inclusion of two First Nations reserves the way that does. There are some definite advantages there.

You know, I guess what I'll conclude with is that although I think that the proposal made by the city of Airdrie tonight could be workable as well, again, it does shift around some of the challenges. I would actually argue that what you've proposed as the commission would probably be the more agreeable, I suppose, solution, the best-case scenario that we can come up with for a few reasons. I think that certainly Airdrie and Cochrane have a lot of synergy. There are a lot of similar challenges that they face in terms of growth challenges and these sorts of things. I think they're very similar types of communities. I think there's a good working

relationship between the two communities already both at the municipal level and various other levels.

I also think it's important, you know, to always try to find ways to keep representation patterns the same; in other words, where you've got federal ridings and provincial ridings that are as closely aligned as possible. Obviously, the Airdrie-Cochrane alignment has always – for a long period of time now, 25, 30 years at least – been the pattern federally. I think that that allows some ability for provincial, federal, and municipal politicians to work together on some of the challenges for the area in the best way. Certainly, in my mind that would be a beneficial thing as well. You know, I'm not here to make any proposal for change to your recommendations. I think they are okay as they are for those particular constituencies, with those small little exceptions.

I'll leave you with one last thought as well. One thing that I've noticed – maybe it is existing and just wasn't used tonight, but, you know, the idea of having some mapping software that could be used during these discussions. I noted, for example, that when Airdrie put up their proposal, there was a small area – it looks like a small area – that they were proposing be added into Highwood, and they didn't have population numbers for it. They were estimating a few thousand. I think they're probably estimating quite low for that. I don't know the area real well, but I did in a past life do some work in that area, and I know there's been significant growth down there, so that might have a significant impact on the Highwood constituency. Had we been able to pull it up and do some mapping and pull that population – I've seen that done at the federal commissions in the past. It might be a good recommendation for you to be able to put for future commissions, to have that in existence for the future.

The Chair: Just, you know, chatting, it's not fast enough and easy enough to use. It is fussy. It's pretty close, but it's not perfect because, of course, the census blocks which we're using don't perfectly align with the lines that we draw, so somebody at the end has to go around manually and make all those little adjustments all the way around. It does take about 10 minutes to set a boundary with that. In fact, through part of this Ms Livingstone cleverly got census blocks up, and we just used them instead of the mapping software because it was so much faster. Probably she stayed up all night setting it up for us, but nonetheless. I mean, that would be ideal, but I think maybe the software has to improve, and perhaps over the next eight years it will improve.

Mr. Richards: You may want to explore what the federal commissions have used, then, because I'm not even thinking of the last time around but the time before that, so probably about 12 or 13 years ago. They had software they were using that was quite quick and was able to do this job on the fly, so I think it exists. I'm not an expert in this area, but I have seen it in existence, and it's going back more than a decade, so I think it's something for a suggestion. Just in terms of maybe the next commission it might be helpful. That would have been something that we could have looked at at that point, and you could have determined right on the spot whether this is feasible or not. Just a suggestion on that part.

I'd be happy to take any other questions.

The Chair: Thanks. Well, I just want to start off by saying you're our first MLA so . . .

Mr. McLeod: MP.

The Chair: MP. Sorry. You're not an MLA at all. Clearly, it's the end of the third hearing in this day.

Mr. Richards: Yeah. I understand.

The Chair: You're our first MP, and we're honoured to have you here. Thank you very much for making the time to come and share your experience and your objectivity on this task and your positive attitude. Thank you very much.

Ms Livingstone, any questions?

Ms Livingstone: I had just one. I think you'd either mentioned or we'd already asked you about what we've sort of been calling the Bergen finger, a little piece of our Banff-Stoney that goes up.

The other piece that I was wondering about is that our current proposal has the Chestermere riding still coming across the top of Calgary and capturing Bearspaw. Do you have any views on that?

Mr. Richards: Yeah. I don't see that as ideal. No question about that. I mean, I look at the current riding, Chestermere-Rocky View, and I find it a very odd constituency. This is an improvement upon that, certainly. What you've done there is definitely a significant improvement, but I do have concerns about the fact that Bearspaw is essentially split into two different constituencies. That, to me, is no doubt a concern, and it would certainly be nice to find a way for it to be fit entirely with the Cochrane constituency. Having said that, I looked at it in a number of ways myself and, obviously, the city of Airdrie would have done the same. Their proposal was to maintain that boundary there for Bearspaw as it exists. I just don't have a suggestion for you as to how to fix it, unfortunately, and that's the problem. I do see it as an issue, but I'm not sure that it's one you can fix.

I think the same thing goes for Springbank being sort of included with the Banff-Stoney riding, but, again, the same problem exists. You need to have a little bit of population to up the Banff-Stoney one, and you can't really add it in with Cochrane because that would bring their population too high. I can see those as challenges, but like I said at the beginning, it's a pinch point. With Calgary being there, you've got very limited ability in what you can do with southern Alberta. Then, you know, you come up to the north, and you've got a constituency that's remaining kind of intact with Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills, which I don't hear any real concern with. I think it's worked well, and I think you're suggesting keeping it as is. I don't see a concern with that. Then, of course, you know, you just have to think about the impacts on the other constituencies as it ripples out, so I don't really know that you can fix it. I do think that it is a challenge for sure.

9:00

The Bergen one in particular is one that you probably could fix, and I don't think it would change enough. It wouldn't make enough impact on population to either riding to be a problem, so I think I would say that that's one you could fix quite easily.

Ms Livingstone: Thank you. Yeah. I just want to echo the thanks. You know, through this we've certainly gotten an idea of how many people and how much territory an MP has to cover, so taking time out of your very busy schedule to come and assist us is very appreciated. Thank you.

Mr. Richards: Yeah. I just note, like, the idea for me, having represented these constituencies and that there is significant change being proposed in there, I thought it might be good to be able to give that perspective. I'll note as well that I have spent some time in the last couple of months since the proposals initially came out, you know, knocking on doors. It's something I do quite frequently in both parts of the Airdrie constituency that would be merged with Cochrane and also within a couple of the communities in Cochrane as well. I haven't heard any concern at the doors from individuals

on this proposal at all to have Airdrie and Cochrane. I know that there was some allusion made to that earlier, but I don't sense that that's something that people are concerned with. I think, you know, they look at the past history of a federal representation being the two combined, and I don't think they see a concern with it.

Ms Livingstone: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.
Ms Munn?

Ms Munn: I have no comments. Thank you.

The Chair: Mrs. Day?

Mrs. Day: No. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Mr. McLeod?

Mr. McLeod: Thank you for coming.

The Chair: Yes. Thanks. I feel special.

Mr. Richards: Absolutely. Thank you for having me.

The Chair: All right. We'll adjourn and reconvene tomorrow at 1 in Brooks.

[The hearing adjourned at 9:02 p.m.]

