

***A suggested approach for my fellow commissioners:***

What follows is a draft of a suggested approach on how we can, while maintaining complete transparency, have the entire commission engage our technical advisors in the development of a final plan by gaining insight into the possible opportunities and pitfalls by evaluating alternative concepts, based on citizen input, as we move forward to develop the final plan.

The draft suggestion is based on observing how we have managed to resolve differences among ourselves and my experience in dealing with complex (and thorny) problems. The reason this approach is presented as draft is to provide the commission with a starting point from which a final approach can be developed. It is an approach which incorporates the experience of the entire commission and is directed at the specific problem of redistricting.

I've often found David Bohm's discussion of the extreme importance of "dialogue" as a basis for a process that could prepare us for the hard work that is needed to improve our decision making:

Dialogue: The object of dialogue is not to analyze things, or to win an argument, or to exchange opinions. Rather, it is...to listen to everybody's opinions, to suspend them, and to see what all that means. If we can see what all of our opinions mean, then we are sharing a common content, even if we don't agree entirely. It may turn out that the opinions are not really very important - they are all assumptions. And if we can see them all, we may then move more creatively in a different direction.<sup>1</sup>

The approach, sometimes called the Dialogue Decision Process involves a series of structured dialogues between two groups engaged in reaching a decision and implementing the associated course of action. It also deals explicitly with the uncertainty and ambiguity that go hand-in-hand with decision-making.

The first of the two groups is the set of decision makers who, in our case represent a diverse group of citizens who were selected for, among other reasons, their ability to be impartial. What we have in common is our authority to direct resources: people, capital, materials, time and equipment.

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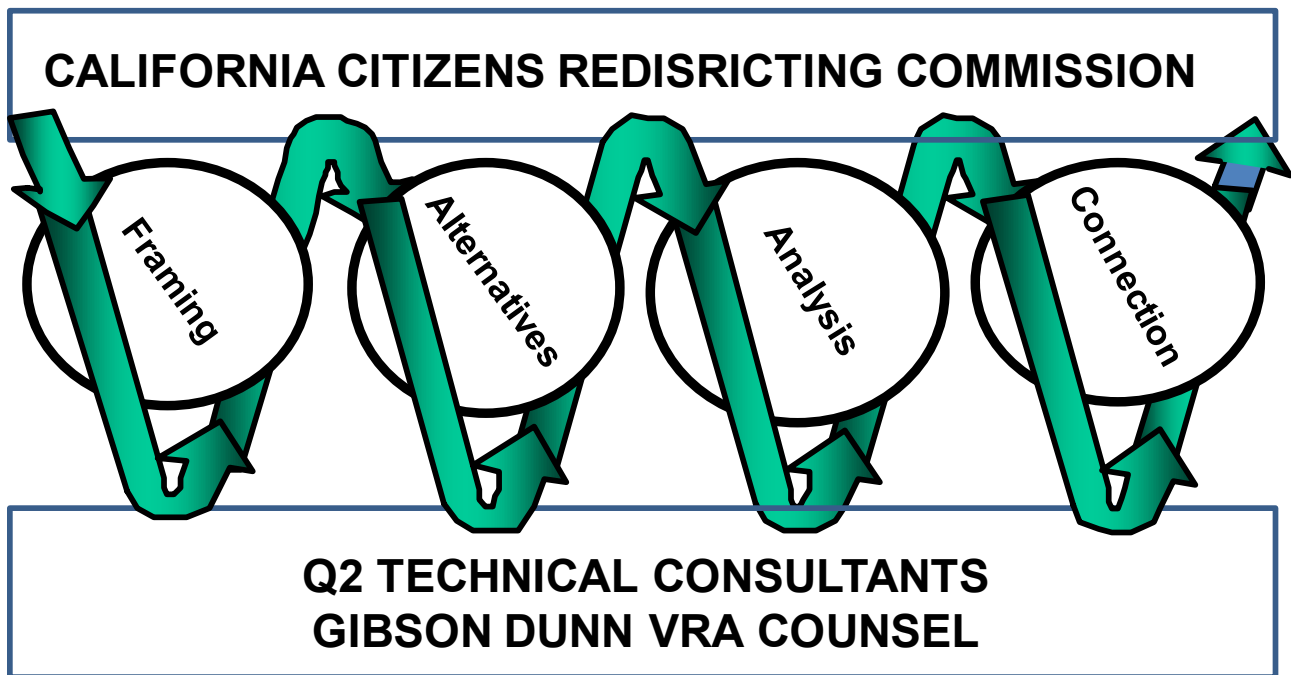
<sup>1</sup> David, Bohm, *On Dialogue*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Pegasus Communications, 1989), 1-14.

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The second group is a team of experienced technical managers and specialists dedicated to the work at hand. As a team selected for their expertise and experience, the second group embodies the learning of the redistricting process. In working together and sharing the capabilities of both group, we jointly create the knowledge upon which the Commission can eventually base our decisions.

The interaction, or dialogue, between these two groups, which involves sharing and learning for both, takes place across four sequential, structured stages: framing the problem, developing alternatives, conducting analysis and establishing connections.

The process



**FRAMING:** The purpose of the framing stage is to identifying the problem to be solved, or the decision to be made. A common understanding of the definition and scope of the problem must be developed and shared by all concerned. In-depth thinking and clear communication are required to properly frame the problem, to determine which decisions are part of the problem and which are not. In our case a portion of the problem frame has been developed for us by the language found in the California Constitution which is listed on page 4 of the Guide to Redistricting. What we need to further develop our approach to make efficient and effective use of Q2's skills in using the statewide data base that will help us meet our objectives. The same applies to Gibson Dunn on VRA matters.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Once the full commission accepts the framing and boundaries of the decision to be addressed (which in our case is partially settled), in the next stage viable

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alternatives to solving the problem are identified. In our case, viable alternative approaches to solving the problem as framed may originate from any member of the commission. The primary purpose of identifying alternatives is to gain additional insight into the problem being address –in the spirit of Bohm’s definition of dialogue it is not to propose the alternative as the solution. In submitting an alternative approach the originator should describe the alternative’s underlying rationale. Ideally, the final range of alternatives should represent the range of suggestions received during the public hearings that are being held, but should not include any issues outside of the manner in which the framing is described. That is, an alternative that would create political party partisan results.

**ANALYSIS:** The purpose of the analysis activity is performing side-by-side comparisons of the extent to which the two alternative match up with the redistricting direction described in the framing of the problem. The intent, at this point, is not to pick the best alternative but to develop insight into the value that is embedded in each. In some instances this activity could also be described as the search insightful ideas to address the redistricting requirements.

This approach of creating alternative design to gain insight also allows us to conduct analyses by region without committing to a particular state-wide map.

**CONNECTION:** This is the most powerful benefit of the process. All of the shared insights born of systemic analysis come together here in the form of two deliverables: (1) a new alternative (sometimes referred to as the hybrid) which combines the best elements of the initial alternatives analyzed, and (2) the underlying rationale for the selected approach. I have attached a PowerPoint presentation that demonstrates how the process was used in a complex problem at GM.