

LINE DRAWING PHASES

I. Preliminary Direction: This is the first opportunity for Commissioners to provide direction based on what they have heard to date, prior to seeing any potential district boundaries. Currently, preliminary direction is scheduled to take place at the Commission's September 15, 17, and 18 meetings, focusing on different regions at each meeting.

II. Visualizations: Visualizations show hypothetical district-based boundaries for limited geographic areas from the line drawers in response to preliminary direction from the Commission. These visualizations are created to allow the Commissioners to review potential options. Visualizations are not statewide plans. Visualizations may include multiple mutually exclusive scenarios. The line drawers are currently scheduled to post at least one day before the Commission's October 4, 5, and 6 meetings at which those visualizations will be discussed.

III. Public Plans: Presentations of multi-district plans by the public will provide an opportunity to showcase submitters' ideas, potential solutions and specific district boundaries. Some of these plans may resemble visualizations (see above) as they will only be partial plans covering part of the state, while others may cover the entire state (see below) and more resemble full draft plans.

IV. Statewide Plans: Commissioners will have the opportunity to provide additional feedback on preferred visualizations and options that line drawers will then work to merge into statewide plans. Commissioners can then begin to give direction to refine those statewide plans until they are ready for a vote to be adopted formally as draft plans.

PHASE I: PRELIMINARY DIRECTION

Preliminary direction falls into two categories. The first is general statewide direction. This relates to items like how to practically implement redistricting criteria and guidelines for line drawers to follow where there is not more specific Commission direction (e.g. shall line drawers give weight to public COI submissions when not in conflict with other Commission direction?). The first opportunity to consider these types of questions is during the September 15 meeting.

The second is regional feedback. The line drawing team is divided by regions made up of combinations of CCRC outreach zones. We suggest that a specific amount of time be dedicated to each region during each step of the draft map line-drawing process. The amount of time will necessarily vary from region to region, as some regions are more complicated than others for a variety of reasons (more people = more lines; more potential VRA compliance issues; more conflicting public testimony).

During the meetings on September 15, 17, and 18, line drawers will take Commissioners through a "tour" using mapping software and digitized public input of different areas within each region (similar to the COI review sessions). Within each area, the line drawing team will ask the Commission for preliminary direction. In advance of those meetings, it is recommended that the Commission review all public data it has collected for each region. Our line drawers and VRA counsel will be available for questions and guidance throughout this process.

The vast majority of preliminary direction will likely fall into three general categories:

1) Whenever possible: When there is a consensus around a strong preference, the Commission can direct line drawers to implement those in all visualizations. Line drawers will attempt to comply with these preferences for all visualizations whenever possible. For example, the Commission may state a strong preference that a particular city be entirely included in a single district. Note, however, that it is

possible that this may lead to visualizations that would, if implemented, conflict with the law. For example, direction to include an entire city in a single district might conflict with the higher ranked criterion of VRA compliance. It is also possible that one direction may substantially limit the ability to comply with another Commission direction.

2) Explore the possibility: These types of directions represent preferences. The Commission would instruct line drawers to implement as many of these preferences as possible. These directions may fall into a wide range of subcategories. Some may be considered more important than others. Some may be specific to particular plans (e.g., “maintain this COI for Congress because the underlying issues that unite it relate to federal policy”).

3) Multiple options: These types of directions may occur where the Commission has heard conflicting public testimony, for example, some members of community A wanting to be with community B, while others want to be with community C. The Commission may ask to see both options to be able to assess the effects. Functionally this means that the Commission would request to see at least two different visualizations.

4) Flexibility: In some places, the direction may be to provide elasticity. In the scenario above, for example, the Commission may direct that community A could be combined with either community B or community C, depending on what worked best for the rest of the plan. Such direction is critical as it will allow for better compliance with the other types of Commission direction.

During the first round of giving direction to line drawers, the Commission may consider the following guidelines:

*** The Commission is not trying to make final decisions at this stage:** Preliminary direction will allow for visualizations to be created that enable the Commission to understand the relationship of the various criteria in relationship to each other. Commissioners may feel strongly about a particular direction but may feel less strongly once the implementation of that direction becomes clear. Commissioners may not have strong feelings about an area until they see potential district lines, which can help to narrow down future direction. Direction will necessarily evolve throughout the line drawing process.

*** The Commission need not reach consensus at this time:** The goal at this stage is not to decide. The intent is not to have a series of formal votes. Rather the goal is to get a sense of how the Commissioners feel about scenarios they wish to further explore. If two groups of Commissioners have differing opinions, for example, it would functionally serve as direction to the line drawers to create two different visualizations so those options can be compared at a future date.

*** The Commission need not try to identify all possibilities at this stage:** There are literally billions of potential combinations of the map. While the goal is not to pick a preferred option right out of the gate, the goal is also not to identify every possible outcome. Commissioners should provide direction that allows the line drawing team to come back with a reasonable number of visualizations that will allow for robust future debate and discussion.

PHASE II: VISUALIZATIONS

Visualizations will be the first potential district boundaries that will be produced by the line drawers. It is important to consider what these visualizations will and will not be:

*** They will not be complete plans:** Visualizations will not cover the entire state. Rather they will only cover a particular area. The specific area may vary from as big as several adjacent outreach zones, to as

small as only a portion of a single zone, depending on how interconnected decisions are in a given part of the state.

*** They will demonstrate tradeoffs:** In most circumstances, there will be multiple visualizations in a given geographic area, particularly early in the line drawing process. These different visualizations will help show which Commission directions can be implemented simultaneously, and which will require prioritizing one direction over another.

*** They may not be interchangeable:** A preferred visualization in one area may not be compatible with a preferred visualization in another area. Again, this will be particularly true in the early stages of the line drawing process as the Commission develops and refines its preferences. As that iterative process continues, these tradeoffs will continue to be highlighted and options narrowed to those that can be blended into a cohesive statewide plan.

*** They will require ongoing refinement:** Early visualizations will be less refined than future iterations. For example, early Congressional visualizations may not attempt to hit exact population deviation requirements. This is to ensure that time is used efficiently so Commissioners can confront tradeoffs early and begin refining their thinking. As the process moves along, not only will options be narrowed, but visualizations will move from “proofs of concept” to more adoptable forms.

The vast majority of feedback on visualizations will fall into five general categories:

1) Maintain: Some Commissioners may like a particular visualization “as is” and simply want to ensure that option continues to move forward as changes are made throughout the line drawing process.

2) Amend: Some Commissioners may like specific parts of a visualization, but would like to see changes to other parts. Direction in these cases may focus on a single visualization or on blending preferred elements from multiple visualizations. In the case of the latter, line drawers will inform the Commission where those preferred elements can be integrated and where they may be incompatible.

3) Discard: Some visualizations once reviewed may simply be discarded. It is an important part of the process to explore options and understand what does and does not accomplish the Commission’s goals. Discarded visualizations will allow the Commission to focus on more viable options.

4) Add: The Commission will provide preliminary directions without the benefit of seeing potential district boundaries. Once those potential districts are available, more specific debate and discussion can take place. Visualizations may highlight issues not previously apparent to Commissioners and result in requests to see brand new visualizations not based on the preliminary direction.

5) Prioritize: Particularly as the visualization process proceeds and Commissioners start narrowing down preferences within specific areas, directions will necessarily include preferences between areas. Not all visualizations will be compatible with each other and this feedback will be critical to merging visualizations into a full statewide plan.

Critically, unlike the preliminary direction phase, the visualization process will move the Commission towards consensus and decision making. The Commission will be able to start prioritizing which options are preferred for the Commission’s first statewide plans. This may not require a series of up and down votes and thus be a relatively efficient process. The goal is to ensure that line drawers have the necessary directions they need to implement Commissioners’ desires.