



ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD

**Alaska Redistricting Board Meeting
November 5, 2021 | 9:00 a.m.
Alaska Redistricting Board Office, 3901 Old Seward Highway, Suite 141,
Anchorage, AK 99503**

The Alaska Redistricting Board met on November 5, 2021. Present participants are below:

John Binkley	Chair of the Board
Melanie Bahnke	Board Member
Bethany Marcum	Board Member
Budd Simpson	Board Member
Nicole Borromeo	Board Member
Peter Torkelson	Executive Director
TJ Presley	Deputy Director
Juli Lucky	Staff Member
Matt Singer	Legal Counsel

Agenda

- Call to Order & Establish Quorum
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Minutes
- Public Testimony
- Executive Session with Legal Counsel
- Voting Rights Act Compliance in 2020 Proposed Plans
- Review of Sept 16 Census Physical Delivery Data
- Public Hearing Tour Summary
- Review & Discussion: Tasks Ahead, Key Decisions
- Mapping Work Session
- Adopt Final Redistricting Map
- Adjournment

Mapping Work Session

The board exited recess and entered a mapping work session at 9:00 a.m.

Member Simpson moved for the Board to enter executive session for the purpose of receiving legal advice under Alaska Statute AS 44.62.310 (c)(3) and AS 44.62.310(c)(4) respectively involving matters which by law, municipal charter, or ordinance are required to be confidential and matters involving consideration of government records that by law are not subject to public disclosure. Member Bahnke seconded the motion.



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The board entered executive session at 9:05 a.m.

The board exited executive session and entered back into a mapping work session at 10:40 a.m.

The board exited the mapping work session at 12:26 p.m.

Public Testimony

Public testimony was given as follows:

- Scenic Foothills Community Council member and representative, Yarrow Silvers, read a resolution that was passed by the Scenic Foothills Community Council: "Now therefore it be resolved that the Scenic Foothills Community Council recommends that the redistricting board bring the new state redistricting plan into closer alignment with local neighborhood boundaries, including East Anchorage, and not split off part of the socioeconomically distinct East Anchorage neighborhoods, including the Scenic Foothills Community Council neighborhood, Eagle River, or a South Anchorage district which are socioeconomically distinct from East Anchorage especially done in the current proposed Board Map v.3 around the Muldoon curve." This resolution passed on November 4, 2021 with 18 votes in favor and 0 opposed. Although it was too late to make changes to the recently passed resolution the night before, the Council was shown the newly revised working maps and many Council members spoke strongly in favor of Board Map v.4 Best.
- Anchorage resident, Yarrow Silvers, spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best, as it is more compact, respects socioeconomic boundaries, has acceptable deviations, considers public testimony, unlikely to violate the Voting Rights Act, and preserves the voices of racially diverse communities in East Anchorage. Yarrow expressed concerns about Board Map v.1 being analyzed for Voting Rights Act violations in the last mapping work session but was still "on the table" this morning with changes being made to the map. Although the map was adjusted during the current date's mapping work session, much of Anchorage is "still chopped up", districts have been created that "look like snakes", and natural socioeconomic boundaries are not respected. In particular, District 20 remains strangely divided with part of the district in a South Anchorage district. This option feels disingenuous and raises many questions.
- Alaskans for Fair Redistricting (AFFR) representative, Joelle Hall, spoke in favor of Board Map v.4. Additionally, Joelle suggested that a record be made on what did and did not work well in this process so that participants of the next redistricting cycle can benefit from the experiences of those who worked in this redistricting cycle.
- Anchorage resident, Felisa Wilson, expressed concern about last minute changes being made to the maps about 1 hour prior to public testimony taking place. The integrity of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) and the minority districts around Muldoon, Northeast Anchorage, and Mountain View are best represented in Board Map v.4 Best.
- Spenard Community Council member and representative, Tahnee Conte-Seccareccia, read a resolution passed by the Spenard Community Council: "Whereas, the current boundaries in Spenard Community Council consist of 3 House districts and 3 Senate districts which makes it difficult and burdensome for the Council, and all volunteer entities, to coordinate on state projects and issues that directly affect Spenard. Now therefore be it resolved that the



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Spenard Community Council recommends that the redistricting board bring the new state redistricting plan into closer alignment with local neighborhood boundaries including the Spenard Community Council boundaries and the slightly expounded boundaries contained in the Spenard corridor plan.” This resolution was unanimously approved by the Spenard Community Council on October 6, 2021.

- West Anchorage resident, Tahnee Conte-Seccareccia, expressed concern about the recent changes made to maps and the limited time for public testimony to be given at the current public session. Tahnee spoke against Board Map v.3 and urged the board to consider Board Map v.4 Best as there are straight lines in Board Map v.4 Best and respects the idea of compactness with apparent attempts of gerrymandering. Tahnee encouraged the board to think about fair and equal representation.
- AFFR Executive Director, Veri di Suvero, noted that the board entering executive session prior to public testimony can be burdensome on the public due to extended waiting periods causing some members of the public to no longer be able to give public testimony. Veri asked the board to provide the public with another opportunity to give public testimony on the maps. Veri spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best as her neighborhood, Westchester Lagoon, is more fully represented in this map.
- Northeast Community Council member and representative, Donna Mears, read the following statement: “Although my understanding is that community council boundaries are not necessarily a consideration for district boundaries, we believe they should be. Particularly in the case of Northeast Community Council where multiple map versions have and continue to split the north and eastern portions of our community, and Bartlett High School into an Eagle River district. My experience as a Northeast Community Council board member over the last couple years is that state and local representatives are very small portions of our council district rarely, if ever, show up. This is important. In Anchorage, the most consistent and accessible opportunity for constituents to interact with the representatives is at community council meetings; this is the place where our work is done both for representatives and the community. From our perspective, in Northeast Anchorage, community boundaries are more important than a slightly larger population deviation as it provides better access to our representatives. Again, Bartlett should be in a district with families it serves and Northeast Anchorage residents should be paired with their neighbors.” Donna stated that the Northeast Community Council met on October 21, 2021 and they do not have a statement on the most current maps, but from Donna’s personal perspective, Board Map v.4 Best reflects the Northeast Community Council’s desires.
- Fairbanks North Star Borough resident, Robin O’Donoghue, strongly opposes taking the excess population in Goldstream Valley to populate the rural interior district as Goldstream Valley is essentially the suburbs of Fairbanks about 10-15 minutes out of town and is very highly socioeconomically integrated with the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. In Robin’s experience, the people of Goldstream Valley live, work, and play in the University of Alaska-Fairbanks area. Additionally, Robin pointed out that, while the Board did recognize the resolution passed by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly, which requested the boundary to be broken, the board did not fully recognize other parts of the resolution which requested for communities in the Borough to remain together. Placing Goldstream Valley into the greater interior does not respect the request of the Borough. Robin spoke in favor of the AFFR map’s representation of Fairbanks.
- AFFR representative, David Dunsmore, spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best as it is most



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aligned with the constitutional mandates and with AFFR's process in Anchorage of trying to ensure that communities of interest and distinct neighborhoods, to the maximum extent possible, are represented. David listed the following reasons why Board Map v.4 Best is the preferred map: 1) East Anchorage, in Board Map v.3 Alt. has odd ways in which it divides the neighborhoods of East Anchorage. 2) A portion of the Chugach Foothills subdivision along the Muldoon Road curve is placed in a district with the Huffman/O'Malley neighborhood; this is likely unconstitutional as it is a large corridor of land with no population and there are no dwelling units connecting the Chugach Foothills to the Huffman/O'Malley area. In addition to differing income levels between the two neighborhoods, both neighborhoods have nothing in common in terms of legislative needs for their neighborhoods. 3) Board Map v.4 Best creates logical South Anchorage districts that are separated from East Anchorage. 4) West Anchorage is better represented under Board Map v.4 Best. 5) One of the main problems with Board Map v.3 Alt. is that District 15 puts 3 distinct population centers into one district whereas Board Map v.4 Best has districts that are much more reasonably compact.

- Anchorage resident, Chris Nelson, stated that JBER includes military retirees and military families who live off-post in the areas adjacent to JBER. Chris Nelson stated that Board Map v.3 Alt. best suits the retiree community and military families who live adjacent to the base.
- Fairbanks resident, Savannah Fletcher, expressed concern about Goldstream Valley not being joined with the group it is most socioeconomically similar with. Savannah spoke in opposition of placing Goldstream Valley with the interior community as it is an inaccurate reflection of the Goldstream community. Communities such as Tok and Salcha make more sense to combine with the rural interior community. Additionally, Savannah expressed frustration for the public testimony process, particularly for people who have to get to back to work.
- Fairbanks resident, Kasey Casort, expressed frustration for the challenges the public had in giving public testimony during the current session. Additionally, Kasey spoke in favor of keeping Goldstream grouped with communities like Ester, Chena Pump, Chena Ridge, and the University of Alaska-Fairbanks.
- Calista Corporation representative, Andrew Guy, stated that the state and federal factors for the process are given much weight, but not cultural factors; this is what is detrimental to the Calista region. Since the 1980's, Calista has been split into multiple districts. Calista experiences the highest rates of infection and death due to COVID-19. Representation equals money, and Calista has been losing out on this for decades. The cumulative effect of these decades has resulted in one of the worst COVID-19 circumstances in rural Alaska. Calista has always given its population to other districts; they are hoping to be able to finally have a voice for the people in their region.
- Ester resident, Bryan Whitten, stated that the Goldstream community is a critical part of the Fairbanks community, particularly on the west end. It also mainly supports the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. Board Map v.3 breaks Goldstream into other rural communities. Bryan requested that the Board reconsider redistricting Goldstream with rural communities.
- Anchorage resident, Erin Willahan, spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best. Unlike Board Map v.3, which separates the contiguous neighborhoods of Mountain View into 3 and Fairview into 2. Board Map v.4 Best is more compact, contiguous, and socioeconomically integrated. Board Map v.3 poses the possibility of gerrymandering and unequal representation.
- Fairbanks resident, John Perreault, spoke in opposition of Goldstream Valley being separated from Fairbanks as it is socioeconomically integrated with the rest of the Fairbanks



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North Star Borough where their homes, jobs, schools, friends, and family are.

- Ester resident, Nicole Eisemam, stated that Goldstream Valley residents share strong socioeconomic ties with Ester, Chena Pump, Chena Ridge, and the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. The communities on the west side of Fairbanks should share representation. Nicole spoke against Goldstream being grouped with rural interior communities. Nicole suggested grouping Tok, Delta Junction, Salcha, Harding Lake, and Eilson together. Nicole expressed frustration for the Board spending much of the current session on the Anchorage community.
- Fairbanks resident, Alyssa Clinton, spoke against Goldstream being grouped with communities along the Yukon. Taking Eielson and Salcha away from North Pole and placing North Pole with Fairbanks does not make sense. Alyssa spoke in favor of the AFFR map as it best represents the socioeconomic, racial, and cultural ties in the interior communities.
- Alaska Black Caucus President and CEO, Celeste Hodge-Growden, expressed frustration on the public testimony process and spoke against the Anchorage map proposed by Board member Marcum as it sacrifices representation of the communities of color to ensure partisan power and puts parts of neighborhoods around the Muldoon curve into a South Anchorage district. East Anchorage is socioeconomically distinct from South Anchorage. Celeste spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best as it respects neighborhood boundaries, does not split East Anchorage into Eagle River and South Anchorage, and provides for better representation.
- Fairbanks resident, Kelvin Rogers, expressed frustration with the public testimony process and the newly revised maps not being posted on the website. Kelvin spoke in favor of grouping Goldstream with the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. Kelvin spoke against Board Map v.3.
- Fairbanks resident, Luke Hopkins, recited the resolution recently passed by the Fairbanks North Star Borough: "Whereas, existing communities of interest should be represented based on city boundaries, geographical proximity, and interconnected neighborhoods that share concerns, interests and values... Now therefore be it resolved, to further request contiguous and compact districts that keep communities of interest together." Luke spoke against Goldstream Valley being redistricted with rural interior communities and against North Pole being redistricted with Fairbanks. Overall, Luke agrees with other Fairbanks residents' testimonies.
- Fairbanks resident, Elyse Guttenberg, expressed frustration with the public testimony process, the newly revised maps not being posted on the website, and with much of the current session being spent on Anchorage. Elyse spoke against Goldstream being separated from Fairbanks to be redistricted with rural interior communities.
- Fairbanks resident, Jacqueline Debevec, spoke against Goldstream being separated from Fairbanks and redistricted with rural interior communities and against North Pole being grouped with Fairbanks.
- Fairbanks resident, Peter Miller, spoke against separating Goldstream from Fairbanks as Goldstream residents work and recreate in Fairbanks. Goldstream deserves to have representation and separating Goldstream from Fairbanks would result in unfair representation. Peter expressed frustration for the public testimony process and long wait times to testify.
- Juneau resident, Bill Moser, spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best and spoke against Board Map v.3. Bill noted that Board Map v.3 should be discounted at this point in the process.



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- Fairbanks resident, David Guttenberg, stated that the board is repeating the drawing of a map that has been declared unconstitutional in 2010 by breaking up socioeconomic boundaries and disenfranchising communities statewide, thus forcing underrepresentation. The proclaimed map in 2013 has the best representation of Fairbanks.
- Anchorage resident, Alex Baker, spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best as it is the best map for his neighborhood in Fairview.
- Representative Zack Fields expressed concern for Board Map v.3 as it has not been publicly vetted and is less compact than Board Map v.4. Board Map v.3 also seems to be an attempt at partisan gerrymandering. The Senate Minority Caucus map does a better job at having low deviations than Board Map v.3. Rep. Zack Fields spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best as he can conclude that the person who drew the map was not knowledgeable of incumbents' places of residence, the partisanship in different precincts, and was very cognizant of Anchorage's distinct neighborhoods.
- Chugiak resident, Kelli Toth, stated that many Chugiak residents live and work on JBER. Kelli spoke in favor of Board Map v.3. because it would integrate Chugiak, Eagle River, and JBER together as opposed to districting Chugiak with the Mat-Su Valley.
- Anchorage resident, Kendra Kloster, spoke to the diversity of East Anchorage and highly recommended that East Anchorage communities be kept together. Kendra spoke in favor of Board Map v.4 Best. Kendra encouraged the board to listen to community residents as they know their homelands best.
- Doyon Redistricting Coalition representative, Tanner Amdur-Clark, addressed the following points: 1) Grouping Chevak, Hooper Bay, and Scammon Bay with a Bethel district is unfeasible and is not worth the board's time as it is impossible to group these communities together in a way that creates socioeconomic integration. 2) Board Map v.4. best represents Fairbanks. 3) Based off the feedback given to the Doyon Coalition from Anchorage community councils, Board Map v.4. best aligns with Anchorage.
- Eagle River resident, Jamie Allard, stated that there are many military personnel who live in Eagle River and are connected with Northeast Anchorage and the JBER communities. Most individuals who live in JBER are in the same district and attend Bartlett High School, Eagle River High School, or Chugiak High School. Jamie has spoken to many community members who disagree with Eagle Exit. Eagle River residents conduct business in East Anchorage by stopping to purchase gas or dinner, and to work. Eagle River students attend Anchorage School District schools and Eagle River is represented by the Anchorage Assembly. Splitting Eagle River and redistricting them with Mat-Su Anchorage would take representation away from Eagle River.
- Deltana resident, James Squyres, asked the board to not leave his community out as a "leftover district" and to apply the same effort of compactness, if not more, to District 36.
- Fairbanks resident, David James, spoke against grouping Goldstream Valley with rural interior communities as these communities are socioeconomically distinct from one another. Goldstream should be included with Fairbanks and should be treated as such.
- Fairbanks resident, Sue Sherif, expressed disappointment for the public not being able to view the newly revised Fairbanks maps as it makes public testimony difficult. Sue is a current resident of District 6 and knows what it is like to be in a district that is not associated with the place where she does her business and recreates. It would make more sense for the east area of Fairbanks to be part of an interior district than it would for Goldstream Valley to be part of an interior district.



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- Clergy Advocacy Board Planned Parenthood representative, Kristen Peters, asked the board to not divide or integrate communities in order to serve one's political agendas. Kristen urged the board to consider when the lines drawn turn into policies and ensure they are doing right by their neighbors. Kristen stated that Board Map v.3 takes Goldstream out of the communities it has connections to and integrates North Pole with Fairbanks, creating unfair representation for distinct communities. The map seems to be politically motivated rather than community-oriented. Kristen also expressed frustration for the public testimony process and for the Fairbanks revised maps not being posted on the board's website.
- Fairbanks resident, Gary Newman, asked the board to reconsider moving Northwest Fairbanks into District 36. The focus on Eielson being an economic engine fails to recognize the socioeconomic integration of the constitutional requirement as Eielson is a closed Air Force Base that cannot be accessed without valid reason through a gate. They have their own schools, recreations, social structure, and even their own power plant. This is nowhere close to being socially integrated into the Borough. By contrast, Goldstream Valley works, shops, and recreates in Fairbanks. Eielson Air Force Base residents are more likely to recreate (hunting and fishing) in the areas south of the Richardson. Logically, Eielson Air Force Base would be grouped best with District 36.
- Anchorage resident, Ann Brown, spoke in favor of Board Map v.3 for civilian and military populations.
- Anchorage resident, Lacey Hemming, spoke in favor of Board Map v.4. Best as it keeps the neighborhoods together with natural boundaries that follow the community councils in the area. Lacey spoke against the map drawn by Ms. Marcum as it places East Anchorage in Eagle River and the Muldoon curve in South Anchorage. Both communities are distinct socioeconomically. The map also silences the voices of East Anchorage residents and ignores the testimony given by Anchorage residents.
- Anchorage resident, Teresa Wrobel, noted that she currently lives in Anchorage but grew up in Fairbanks, specifically Goldstream Valley. Most Goldstream Valley residents have connections to the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. Teresa spoke against Goldstream Valley being grouped with rural interior Alaska because it is a part of Fairbanks. Tok and Delta are also not connected to Goldstream.
- Wasilla resident, John Nelson, stated that it is important for the board to take into consideration the residents of each community and attempt to keep communities together. Separation of the Chugiak-Eagle River area is unfair. Both communities are likeminded, and they should remain together. It is discouraging to see the Denali district be connected into the Mat-Su Borough; they are separate and should be considered as such. John spoke in favor of Board Map v.3. and encouraged the Board to give the public more opportunity to give public comment after the current session given that the newly revised maps have not been uploaded to the website.
- Anchorage Community Land Trust Executive Director, Kirk Rose, stated he participates in many activities in Mountain View and Fairview and spoke in favor of these communities remaining whole and cohesive. There have been issues of representation impacting these communities for many years. For many years, both districts have only been represented by 1 Assemblymember while other districts have been represented by 2. Any maps that divide these communities is problematic for representation for these low-income and diverse communities.
- Alaskans for Fair and Equitable Redistricting representative, Randy Ruedrich, requested the



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following on behalf of Calista: There is an issue with getting Calista villages into District 37. Calista has minimal impact in the state Senate as they are severely diluted with little to no influence. Allow some Calista villages (Platinum, Goodnews Bay, Chevak, etc.) to go into District 37 to allow them to build a small positive majority in that district. Additionally, Randy stated that it is unfortunate that those who testified today had not had a chance to see the newly revised Fairbanks map where full representation has been achieved. From testimony, there was an impression that only the far west side of the Borough is affected. The area assigned to District 36 goes over to the eastside.

- Delta Junction resident, Dawn Frazier, advocated for putting the military communities (Eielson Air Force Base, Fort Greeley, and Clear Air Force Base) together in one contiguous district. The horseshoe-shaped district that is currently there includes communities that are not socioeconomically integrated and is not compact.

Member Bahnke requested that the board receive legal counsel advice, particularly on the Anchorage map, in executive session prior to the board considering and adopting the final map.

Member Borromeo moved for the board to enter executive session for the purpose of receiving legal advice under Alaska Statute AS 44.62.310 (c)(3) and AS 44.62.310(c)(4) respectively involving matters which by law, municipal charter, or ordinance are required to be confidential and matters involving consideration of government records that by law are not subject to public disclosure. Member Bahnke seconded the motion.

The board entered executive session at 4:05pm.

The board exited executive session at 5:00pm.

The Board held extensive discussion and reached consensus on areas across the state including Mat-su, Fairbanks, Interior/Rural, and Kenai.

Board members debated two versions of Anchorage districts. Member Bahnke moved that the Board adopt an Anchorage map labeled v.4 best. Member Simpson seconded the motion. After discussion, a roll call vote was held with the following results:

In favor: Members Bahnke, Borromeo and Simpson
Opposed: Members Binkley and Marcum

Member Simpson moved that the board adopt the redistricting map labeled "Board Consensus v.7" which, if the motion passes, will be labeled the "Final Map", as the final redistricting map with the allowance that staff may make minor changes to facilitate metes and bounds, and will return a report with recommended changes to the board for review prior to final proclamation adoption. Member Marcum seconded the motion.

Chairman Binkley requested a roll call vote.

- Member Simpson voted in favor.
- Member Marcum voted in opposition.



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- Chairman Binkley voted in favor.
- Member Borrromeo voted in favor.
- Member Bahnke voted in favor.

The motion passed 4 to 1.

Chairman Binkley outlined the next steps:

- Staff will begin reviewing the map for technical errors, if any.
- A cartographer will work on describing every district by metes and bounds.
- If the two above items are incomplete by November 8, they will continue until they are completed.
- The map will be published onto the board's website on November 6 by noon.
- The board will reconvene on November 8 and begin the session by taking public testimony on Senate pairings.
- The board will take the 40 House seats and pair them into Senate districts that are composed of 2 contiguous House districts. The pairings will be determined after public testimony.

Member Borrromeo moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Bahnke seconded the motion.

The board adjourned at 7:09 p.m.