



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission
Public Hearings

Calgary

Wednesday, June 11, 2025
6:31 p.m.

Transcript No. 18

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission

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Electoral Boundaries Commission Public Hearings – Calgary

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Mary-Anne Williams

6:31 p.m.

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[Justice Miller in the chair]

The Chair: Well, good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We're going to start our evening public hearing. Welcome to Calgary's sixth public hearing, I guess, of our week. We spent a long day yesterday hearing from Calgarians and a full day this morning and this afternoon.

First of all, I want to introduce the commission to those who are in the gallery. My name is Justice Dallas Miller. I'm the chairman of the commission, and I also serve as a justice of the Court of King's Bench in southern Alberta.

To my left is Susan Samson, a long-time resident of Sylvan Lake, Alberta, an experienced municipal politician who also served a term as mayor of Sylvan Lake. Susan has volunteered throughout her time in Sylvan Lake and was recognized for that volunteer service by way of receiving citizen of the year award and the Queen Elizabeth II diamond jubilee medal.

To Susan's left is John Evans, KC, a lawyer with the province-wide firm known as Stringam. He works out of the Lethbridge office but does conduct trials throughout the province. John's legal ability was recognized by being awarded the KC, or King's Counsel, designation. John also volunteers as a member of the Alberta Judicial Nominating Committee.

To my right is Dr. Julian Martin. Dr. Martin is a retired history professor from the University of Alberta. He holds advanced degrees from Cambridge University. Dr. Martin has volunteered on many committees while living in Edmonton, and now as he lives in Sherwood Park, he volunteers as well. He serves on two provincial tribunals, the Surface Rights Board and the Land Compensation Board.

At the far end of the table is Mr. Greg Clark. Mr. Clark is from Calgary, an entrepreneur and consultant focusing on information and knowledge management. He too is a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II platinum jubilee medal. Greg brings many skills to this commission, and his experience as a one-term MLA in Calgary-Elbow is of great use to us as a commission. Greg also serves as the chairman of the Balancing Pool of Alberta and consults and advises organizations relative to proper governance.

We are your Electoral Boundaries Commission. We are a commission, an independent body, established by the Legislature of Alberta, and our task is to deal with the challenge of creating two new electoral divisions in Alberta and, if necessary, redraw some of the remaining 87. We're moving from 87 electoral divisions to 89 as a result of legislative changes.

It's of assistance to give members of the public some idea as to the timeline that we have as a commission. The commission was appointed by the Speaker of the Legislature in late March of this year. We met a couple of times in the month of April, started our public hearings in late May, and we are touring the province throughout the month of June. We will complete the first stage of public hearings in late June, and then we will deliberate. We will consider the information we received from public hearings, look at the population data, deal with the maps, and come up with an interim report in terms of the 89 proposed electoral divisions. That must be filed with the Speaker of the Legislature no later than late October.

Once that report is filed, it becomes a public document. The public can review it, respond to it. We will then have another round of public hearings and hear from the public specifically on what we initially recommended. Those public hearings will no doubt take place in possibly late November, December, and definitely January and February. We will then complete the final report, and we are

bound by the legislation to have it submitted by late March of 2026. So it's a one-year project, basically, for those of us on the commission.

As you are no doubt aware, Alberta will be divided into 89 electoral districts. One member represents each electoral district in the Legislature of Alberta. Voters, of course, in that constituency elect the MLA.

In order to give some perspective as to the numbers that we're dealing with and the approach that we will use, I thought it was helpful to review what happened at the last Electoral Boundaries Commission. That report was submitted to the Speaker in 2017. As you can see from the middle bar, the 2017 Electoral Boundaries Commission relied on a population of Alberta of just over 4 million people. We are faced with a much more expansive population. The population we will be using is 4.8 million, and I'll give you a few more specifics later. The formula used by the last commission was the population of 4,062,609 divided by the 87 members, resulted in a mean average of 46,697 for each electoral division. In Canada we don't have the strict principle of one person, one vote; rather, we have the term "effective representation" that provides a target for each electoral division. The target for 2017 was 35,023 up to 58,371. That was 2017.

Now, for our commission the population that we're using is 4,888,723. We've got a number of divisions of 89. That results in 54,929 as the mean average. Again, the target minus 25 is 41,197 up to plus 25, 68,661. That's the target we must be in for each electoral division.

In terms of population we are relying on the statistics and the direction of the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, that says we must rely on the most recent census. Unfortunately, the most recent federal census is 2021, but Statistics Canada regularly updates that information, and we have further validation and verification from the Alberta Treasury Board. The cut-off date for our population is July 2024. You'll see certain population numbers on the maps that we will show, and those numbers come from July 2024.

The task, therefore, of the Electoral Boundaries Commission is to hear from Albertans as to how best we can recommend to the Legislative Assembly boundaries that provide for effective representation. You'll hear that term probably throughout the session this evening. How we arrive at effective representation: we're guided by principles of, first of all, section 3 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, case law relating to section 3, and the legislation of the province. Factors we consider are relative sparsity and density of population throughout the province; common community interests and organizations; geographic features, typically more prominent in areas outside of Calgary and Edmonton, but geographic features even factor in in urban ridings; communication and transportation across Alberta. Those lines are considered.

Our ultimate goal is to come up with understandable and clear boundaries for the constituencies. There is a catch-all provision in the legislation that allows us to consider any other factors we as a commission deem necessary, and those factors, no doubt, will come about as a result of the information we garner through public hearings.

That's a background and a summary of our timeline, the type of work we're doing, what we'll rely upon. Now we want to hear from you as Albertans.

6:40

Our practice has been to – you may have received information when you signed up, when you registered to present. We limit it to seven minutes of presentation and three minutes for questions and discussion and dialogue. I'm looking at the schedule this evening;

I don't think I need to strictly enforce the seven minutes. We haven't enforced it strictly at any time or very few times this week.

I would call on the first presenter. I believe the first and second presenters are presenting together. David Cloutier and Neelam Naz, could you come forward, please? Please have a seat, identify yourselves, tell us what electoral division you are from, and proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Cloutier: Great. I'm David Cloutier, and I am from Calgary-Shaw.

Mrs. Naz: My name is Neelam Naz, and I'm also from Calgary-Shaw.

The Chair: Okay. Great. Please proceed.

Mr. Cloutier: Thank you so much. Thank you for your time, members of the commission, on this really important work. I was talking with one of you earlier, just remarking on how much travel there is involved with this, how long your days are, so I really appreciate your commitment to democracy in this work.

Again, my name is David Cloutier, and Neelam is going to be sharing some things with me today. Actually, part of the deal was that Neelam was a little nervous to share with the group, and I said, "well, why don't we do it together?" so we both have some thoughts we'll share throughout this. Neelam is an incredibly insightful and talented member of the community whom I thought would have some really interesting insights for this group, so I'm glad she's here.

I'll share some thoughts and then invite you to jump in.

Mrs. Naz: Great. Thank you, David.

Mr. Cloutier: I'm a bit of a policy nerd. You know, my day thing is that I'm a school administrator, and I'm really passionate about that work, but I'm one of the first people that will put my hand up when we're developing new policy and procedure. I studied some political science in university. I spent time researching electoral impacts of floor crossing, and I actually also had a chance to run in the 2023 provincial election. You know, this work of public service and public policy is very important to me on a theoretical, which became practical, level, too.

I've also been a lifelong Calgarian in specifically south Calgary. The furthest north I ever lived was Patterson – that felt very foreign from my roots in Woodlands – and I started my family in the growing community of Legacy. We've since moved into Bridlewood. I also work in south Calgary, so it's very much kind of my home.

What I really want to emphasize is that I think a really important part of the conversation in south Calgary is the significant growth that we're seeing. We're seeing this in several municipalities in Alberta, but there is significant population growth that has already happened since the last census. There is also significant population growth ahead. When we look at, you know, the new communities – I remember, when I moved into Legacy, it was only a third done; I think it's about two-thirds done at this point – there's a lot more housing, and then we're seeing other changes to that development plan as well. We're seeing in Legacy, for instance, on the southwest corner, it's called the Township development. It was originally slated to be all retail, and now there has been a significant change to add thousands of residential units in apartments as well.

I highlight that for a couple of reasons. I also highlight the West Macleod residual lands, which are including a residential component as well. Just a really important part, and I hope something the commission will consider, is that south Calgary is

growing really fast. You know, in that spirit of the other factors that might be considered and knowing that when the latest census data comes in those numbers are going to be growing significantly over the next several years, hopefully some of that work can be thoughtfully put together for that riding to allow for some of that growth in those areas.

You know, having talked to thousands of folks in the south, there's a great deal of diversity, but there's also a common experience of living in a municipality and some of the challenges that come with that rapid growth; certainly, not having enough schools and access to health care. There have been a lot of efforts on this front, but I do think it's important to recognize that there is kind of a common challenge that municipality voters face, especially in south Calgary and growing communities.

As well, I think, you know, when we look at the historical work in 2017, Calgary-Shaw was nearing that threshold. Knowing, again, just the change, I think there's some opportunity and there's also some challenge in your work of adding only two seats to a province that has had significantly more growth. We saw reflected in the numbers up here as well that the population representation sizes have increased significantly, a lot of that, again, happening in our municipalities.

One of the pieces that I think is important to highlight and was a challenge in the last electoral commission work was – I quote from the last report – that some of the urban ridings have been thrown substantially out of whack. That was in reference to the size of ridings and the disparity between some of the ridings where you had some with essentially a third of others. You know, some pretty extreme disparities: Calgary-South East having, I think, 92,000 about at this point and then Lesser Slave Lake hitting about 28,000, again based on numbers that are not currently up to date; there's some work on those. But we see this kind of disparity that I think is really important to highlight and look and think about.

That's really tough work, and I appreciate the complexity of the work for the commission because there are a lot of criteria and factors that you need to consider. But I certainly really want to emphasize, from my perspective, the importance of bringing those population numbers closer where possible and trying to eliminate those more extreme disparities. My hope is – certainly, we're seeing some new electoral divisions created or redistributed to allow that population to be well represented in south Calgary.

I think at this point I'll pass things over to Neelam.

Mrs. Naz: Okay. I am actually a realtor. I live in Somerset myself, so south is basically my main area where I work, and I have seen that population growth over the years. There is so much different demographics right now.

My important aspect and my take from this is that whatever way you distribute it, we have to make sure that it's represented properly and it doesn't hamper the existing riding. You know, those new population growths: they have a lot of different demographics. Some of them are even more out of town, out of province, so they are more neutral. That's very important to kind of not hamper the current Calgary-Shaw in a way that gives tilted on one side or the other to any candidate. It has to be very, very nicely done. I think that if it cannot be changed is the perfect one. If it comes to a change, then it has to be making sure that we don't get thrown in with some rural or something. Like, it has to make more sense. That's my take on it. Yeah.

Mr. Cloutier: We're happy to answer any questions.

The Chair: Okay. Great. Good.

Well, let's start at this end of the table. Mr. Evans, any questions or comments?

Mr. Evans: You're approaching it in pretty broad strokes in terms of your overall approach, and you haven't really dealt with any specifics as it relates to Calgary-Shaw. That's what I'm most interested in. When you're essentially espousing a concern, if I understand it, about urban and rural – you may be surprised by this, but it's not novel. Like, everyone has expressed the same concerns. What I want to know is: in this riding can you identify specific areas that you would consider problematic because they're not urban enough or the rest of it is not rural enough? Is there a homogeneous component here? I mean, what are your concerns?

Mr. Cloutier: That's a great question. Actually, one of the things I was considering – it's why I was kind of drafting what my response would be like here – is, you know: could I give you a sample map of what a future Calgary-Shaw might look like? I would say it's a very challenging task, and it's also a challenging task, I think, to think about, particularly as someone who ran, right? It's kind of like: who are you going to say goodbye to if you ever run again in the future down there?

6:50

Kind of parking that aside, I think what I would say and the reason I'm approaching this with, you know, some broader strokes is that one of the things that I hope the group will do is kind of that community analysis. Like, I spent as much time as I could to get the best data that I could. I know there are better open data sets out there, that would tell you community by community, to look at those numbers. But I think what's more important than thinking about specific communities I might change or boundaries I might draw in that area: having spent some time with other candidates in south Calgary, there is a lot of similarity to these new communities. I know that there's a lot of interprovincial migration into all of these communities, particularly into the new ones that are popping up. Again, I talked about the west, the Calgary residual lands, the growth in Legacy.

Mrs. Naz: Legacy, Walden, even Pine Creek, Belmont, you know, all those new ones, Silverado.

Mr. Evans: Those don't mean anything to me because I'm not from here, but maybe if you went to the map and showed where the developments are.

Mr. Cloutier: Yeah. A hundred per cent. Absolutely.

Mr. Evans: I'm interested in everything below Spruce Meadows Trail south, everything below south.

Mr. Cloutier: This is actually a really great map. Neelam might be able to speak to some of it better, but I will tell you, from spending some time down here, that when this was redrawn in 2017, like, this was all farmland, right? This was all farmland. Some of these lands in here are still, I would say, more rural-looking land, but they're part of this land development plan for south Calgary.

I don't know if we can zoom out a little bit more. Thank you very much. Again, down in here, down by the Bow River, these are all developed streets now, and as the developments are continuing, the more that are coming out are quite a lot higher density. From a population consideration it's just been a pretty massive expansion and growth in this area.

Again, I would say that there tends to be a lot of interprovincial migration here. There tends to be a lot of, you know, younger

families like mine. We chose Legacy because it was an affordable option for us to start out and buy our first house.

Mr. Evans: Where is Legacy there?

Mr. Cloutier: Legacy is down at the south here, 210th Avenue.

Mr. Evans: Okay.

Mr. Cloutier: Again, it's actually kind of nice the way this map is currently drawn. Like, it's actually the perfect boundary. I think we've used a natural kind of feature here to divide it. But all of these areas that perhaps, you know, look like rural or urban lands: that's all developed now. There are streets all throughout that section.

Mr. Evans: Let me just interrupt you for a moment. The population numbers we're working off: 68,648. That's a 25 per cent increase. But I think what you're telling me is that those numbers are probably low.

Mr. Cloutier: That is absolutely correct.

Mrs. Naz: That's exactly what – yes.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Above Stoney Trail south: if that part came out of this electoral district and it was just Stoney Trail south, do you think there would be more than 50,000 people in that with all the new development?

Mrs. Naz: Yes, I think so.

Mr. Evans: Thank you.

Mr. Cloutier: I could suggest one more. I don't have an immediate answer for this, but one very quick piece of research to go validate that would be that you could take the population of Shaughnessy and Somerset, which have not had new residential development, and generally remove that from the number of – again, knowing that the number here is probably bigger than that number presented. But, yeah, if you subtract it, you know, up in any of these.

If I could just give you a little bit more lay of the land. Like, Shaughnessy and Somerset have been here for quite a while. Development started in those, I believe, in the 1980s, so they're well established and don't have a lot of new construction and would not have any new apartment buildings.

Mr. Evans: It's saturated.

Mr. Cloutier: Exactly. Whereas everything south of here, even now along Stoney Trail just on the north side of Silverado, has had significant development. Yeah. The only other one that you might think about in your numbers as being saturated is that Chaparral has been saturated for quite a bit of time now, certainly since the last electoral redraw.

Mrs. Naz: It's also one of the oldest.

Mr. Evans: Right.

Mr. Cloutier: The only exception to that, just to make a quick distinction here, is that Chaparral Valley has had new development, and then Wolf Willow and such, and that's down by the Bow River. This is actually right in here – it's hard to see; again, not featured on here – a big bluff, essentially. Chaparral would be just one other in those three, you know, when you're looking at population numbers, that you could consider saturated.

Mrs. Naz: And especially this side – Silverado, Belmont, Pine Creek, and all this – it's still, like, a lot of development happening, a lot of people moving in. There's still a lot of growth happening there, too, which is still also undocumented, I would say.

Mr. Evans: Do they also call Stoney Trail Spruce Meadows?

Mr. Cloutier: I think they used to call it Spruce Meadows drive or something like that.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Now it's Stoney?

Mr. Cloutier: Yes. Correct. It was also 22X or Marquis of Lorne Trail, if you see references to that. When it became part of the Calgary Ring Road, when the southwest Calgary Ring Road was completed, it became Stoney Trail, so if you see references to 22X, Spruce Meadows Trail or drive, and Marquis of Lorne Trail, those would all be references to Stoney Trail.

Mr. Evans: Thank you so much.

The Chair: You answered about three questions right there. Susan, any questions?

Mrs. Samson: Yes. With the new communities coming on – I can probably guess – is there a preference between Chaparral, Walden, or Silverado where you're seeing the complete mix of different types of people, families moving in? Do you have any low-income or higher residential areas? Anything that would stand out that we wouldn't want to . . .

Mrs. Naz: It's more of, I would say, newer families, like first-time buyers and out-of-province migration. That's the kind of growth that has happened there because those were the areas that newcomers coming out of province could afford or the first-time homebuyers could afford. That's the thing, right? I think it's more people who have probably not been there for more than five years, I would say, after the last election. That's the kind of demographics that we are seeing there.

Mrs. Samson: Right.

Just one more. If the western part of Chaparral left, is that a logical dividing line, that main road going through there, without disrupting the communities, or is it even farther over? The line is called – what is that? – Sun Valley Boulevard southwest.

Mrs. Naz: I think it should stay.

Mrs. Samson: Like, that would be the dividing line if you wanted to separate Chaparral east and west?

Mr. Cloutier: I think Sun Valley Boulevard is actually in Calgary-Fish Creek.

Mrs. Samson: It is, but it connects. I don't know what it's called.

Mr. Cloutier: Yeah, so then it becomes – I'm not entirely sure – Chaparral Boulevard once it gets there. Yeah. That becomes Chaparral Boulevard. Would your suggestion be that you're saying west of it?

Mrs. Samson: Yeah, west of it. That would be the dividing line for the neighbourhood known as Chaparral.

Mr. Cloutier: Yeah. Actually, maybe I'll just walk up again just to clarify what's currently Chaparral. I'm not entirely sure. I think,

generally speaking, the electoral division boundaries in Calgary have been typically through a community, right?

Mrs. Samson: It can.

Mr. Cloutier: Like, it wouldn't typically have gone outside? Yeah, so Chaparral would include this section just slightly east of Chaparral Boulevard. But then this kind of blank space in here, that's the bluff, and that provides what this lower part is, which is Chaparral Valley.

Mrs. Samson: Okay. Good.

Mr. Cloutier: Chaparral all the way up, just a little bit past, and then Chaparral Valley is down the hill on the bluff. That bluff, just for the record as well, which might help with some of these other conversations, comes all the way through, if you look at it on Google Maps or something like that. Then on the lower part you have Chaparral Valley, you have Wolf Willow, and Wolf Willow kind of continues, and then you've got the Pine Creek waste-water treatment plant here. That's not changing, but generally speaking, that's a natural barrier there.

Mrs. Naz: And there is another one coming. I think it's called Logan Landing. It's still very much in primary. Yeah.

Mrs. Samson: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Dr. Martin?

7:00

Dr. Martin: Thank you very much. I love it when we get very granular.

Mr. Cloutier: I told you that I was being a policy nerd.

Dr. Martin: Will you characterize this area, south Chaparral, as a different housing stock than the area traditionally known as Chaparral?

Mr. Cloutier: Chaparral Valley?

Dr. Martin: Yeah. I mean, I'm interested in the different types of houses, wealthy houses, modest houses.

Mrs. Naz: Chaparral has a mix of all. Chaparral: from high end to, like, starter homes, everything is there. But I would say not actually starter; I would say more like, you know, mid-tier. Yeah.

Mr. Cloutier: If I could maybe just add one thing to that, I would say that there are a lot more wealthier houses in Chaparral than other communities. I would say that you would not find the same type of large estate houses. Obviously, Chaparral has a lake as well.

Mrs. Naz: Yes. Lake access.

Mr. Cloutier: That would, you know, characterize a fairly different kind of feel with some of the other communities like Walden, Legacy, Silverado, et cetera.

Mrs. Naz: The mid-tier homes in Chaparral are the ones which don't have the lake access. It's a clear divide between the two within Chaparral.

Dr. Martin: Okay. Very good. Thank you.

Mr. Clark: This is really helpful. Now nearing the end of our time in Calgary, we've started to sort of poke away at: what changes

could we make? As you can imagine, there's, like, a ripple effect, right? In some of what you've talked about, you've answered a question or sort of a suspicion I had, I guess. Somerset and Shaughnessy feel like somewhere else just in terms of the numbers, and I guess the question, then, about Chaparral and then 194th Avenue – yes. So Walden is the next one down. Is there much happening in Walden, or is that pretty much built out?

Mrs. Naz: Walden is pretty much, but Walden is still seeing some development happening.

Mr. Clark: Right. And then the . . .

Mrs. Naz: So it's still . . .

Mr. Clark: Sorry. Go ahead. Finish your thought.

Mrs. Naz: Yeah. Walden, like, I would say is still 25 per cent on the development side, and 75 per cent is mostly – yeah.

Mr. Clark: Okay. So what I'm hearing is that, in fact, even if we look at it on Google Maps, we can see the scraped earth, so there clearly seems to be a lot of development there.

Maybe I'll ask a different question. Just south of you we've got Heritage Pointe. Is there much interaction there between those communities?

Mrs. Naz: Heritage Pointe is a different story altogether. It's the elite area, right? It's a totally different area. I think that that is one thing which could be, you know, differentiated.

Mr. Clark: You feel like there's a fundamental – okay. That's great.

Mrs. Naz: Yeah. It's a very fundamental difference there.

Mr. Cloutier: It's a great question, Greg. It's certainly much, much larger lots, and certainly from a pricing perspective, like, you would have very different socioeconomic statuses of people living in, let's say, Calgary-Shaw proper than you would in . . .

Mrs. Naz: It's more an acreage kind of area if I can put it more precisely.

Mr. Clark: Okay. Good. That answered my questions. Thank you so much for being here.

Mr. Evans: Heritage Pointe is on the golf course, right?

Mrs. Naz: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. For a non-Calgarian is Heritage Pointe south of the city boundary?

Mr. Cloutier: Correct.

The Chair: Yeah. Okay. So 226 is the city boundary?

Mrs. Naz: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. Yeah. Now I have a visual. Drive in that way now . . .

Mr. Cloutier: Hundred per cent. Yeah.

The Chair: Yeah. Okay.

Any other questions or comments? We've made use of our time. We had two presenters.

Mrs. Naz: I also just wanted to thank you guys for giving me this opportunity, and I think it was pretty good. I am happy that I could make, you know, a difference and voice my opinion.

The Chair: Thank you. There's nothing like people that live in the riding and especially someone in your position, who . . .

Mrs. Naz: Yeah. I'm a realtor. I'm out on the roads all day, you know?

The Chair: By the way, any good deals in that southeast corner?

Mrs. Naz: Oh, yes. Lots of them. Just reach out to me. I can leave my card for you guys.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much. Much appreciated.

Mrs. Naz: Thank you.

Mr. Cloutier: Thank you very much, everyone, for listening tonight.

The Chair: If you can, we welcome you to stay to hear the rest of the presentations. What's happened in the past is that we've had some dialogue after because we've had some time.

Mrs. Naz: Yes. For sure. Thank you.

Mr. Cloutier: Thank you so much.

The Chair: Thank you.

The next presenter, Mary-Anne Williams.

Mary-Anne Williams: I'm going to approach this from a very different perspective, more of a philosophical perspective. I'm a psychologist. I live in Calgary-Klein, and I work in a public health care agency. I want to approach the topic of electoral boundaries from the perspective of maintaining a strong democracy.

As I said, I live in Calgary-Klein. This is an expansive and diverse district with a large low-income and newcomer population. These populations have unique needs. Many do not drive and are therefore highly dependent on public transit and public services. For both groups a public transit system with multiple access points is essential for getting to and from work, for getting kids to school, and for attending medical and other appointments.

For newcomers add to that having ready access to English language instruction, most of which takes place in Calgary-North East and downtown. Although English competency may seem low on the list of priorities to many, it is one of the most important tools for newcomers to integrate into Canadian society, become citizens, and eventually to vote.

Canada has always been considered a strong democracy. In practical terms that means that every vote counts, that all eligible citizens have the right to vote and are encouraged to do so, and that each of us has the right to express our opinions in a respectful manner. Strong democracies are even stronger when they offer safe venues for open dissent. This could include letter writing, e-mail chains, opinion pieces in the press, telephone campaigns, and protests. By safe I mean being free from physical harm or harassment by security forces, from fines and trumped-up charges, and from arrest. Sadly, in Alberta over the last 18 months these safeguards have not been observed. Protesters have been assaulted, charged, and levied huge fines.

In Canada we have always believed that our system of governance utilized fairness, honesty, and due process to ensure that the voting system was protected and free from outside forces.

The latter might include foreign interference, backroom deals, cronyism, and coercion. Sadly again, in Alberta both the procurement scandal and the cancellation of important municipal projects have shown us that cronyism and political one-upmanship are driving many decisions, decisions that have stalled the development of infrastructure and have resulted in the waste of precious public dollars.

Ideally, people from different cultures and political stripes can and should work together. By encouraging lively and diverse discussion, the end result is expected to be richer and more robust. The blending of tradition and new ideas allows us to maintain our historical identities while also incorporating innovation. This is how societies evolve. I have lived, worked, and studied in Canada, the U.S., and the Middle East, and I can say that the tolerance and diversity that we enjoy in Canada is, shockingly, absent in these countries.

Our approach to diversity has made us a refuge for those whose identities and ideas were discouraged elsewhere, but we are not just a refuge. Inviting those from other countries to study and work here has been to our advantage. These guests have excelled academically and in research and have brought new ideas to the world of business. By welcoming different cultures and religions and by ensuring that everyone, regardless of origin or identity, has a voice and is viewed as equal in the eyes of the law, we have become beacons of tolerance and security globally.

In today's increasingly polarized world diversity of opinion is under threat. We watch as countries around the world enact legislation that limits the freedom of targeted groups in favour of assumed general consensus. In eastern Europe and our neighbour to the south we have seen the weight of discrete political religious perspectives morph into legislation that has put entire communities at risk. In the U.S. gerrymandering, or the change in electoral boundaries that favours one political party over the other, has long been used to increase the strength of the Republican Party at the polls. What we are witnessing today in the U.S. is the final culmination of that process, a process that has resulted in the election of a party bent on dismantling the rule of law and privileging the few. The result has been social chaos and needless violence.

However, we are not here today to discuss U.S. politics but, rather, to safeguard our own political system against the same powerful forces. Yes, the forces of division are very much at work in Alberta. This is being done gradually; for example, by the introduction of bills to introduce political affiliation into the municipal arena, by removing the ability of voters to vote elsewhere if unable to vote in their assigned electoral districts, and by loosening campaign finance legislation. Changes like these are examples of the gradual erosion of electoral parity and an attempt to politicize procedures that were previously apolitical.

7:10

The latest attempt in this direction has been the push to remove the division between rural and urban electoral districts. Why is this of concern? Because in Alberta over the past decade the political climate has shifted. This has led to a notable polarization between urban and rural votes. The erasure of urban and rural boundaries may be a tactic to reverse this trend and return the province to its historical political distribution. This change flies in the face of ensuring electoral parity throughout the province. Ideally, democracy is strengthened to the fair distribution of electoral boundaries, thereby allowing each to maintain its inherent identity and giving voice to the entire electorate.

As someone who has lived and worked in both urban and rural Alberta, I can say that despite the political leanings that may

differentiate one from the other, the majority of Albertans want a government that is balanced in its approach to issues. Yes, there are special-interest groups that prioritize their unique needs and make them the focus of campaign agendas. However, I believe that all Albertans share a desire to live in a province that provides for the entire population equitably. In practical terms this means publicly funded hospitals and schools or clinics, schools with reasonable class sizes and services to address special needs, and homes for the elderly that are adequately staffed. They want politicians who can work together and look beyond the narrow lens of personal benefit. This can only take place if the system itself is fair and not victim to strategies like gerrymandering.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Clark, do you want to . . .

Mr. Clark: No question in particular. I just want you to know that, at least from my perspective as one of five commissioners, this is one of the purest forms of democracy that I've ever participated in. You know, we do things fundamentally differently in Canada than the U.S. I'm very aware of and share a lot of your concerns about what we see south of the border. It is distressing. I've lost sleep more than once with what's happening.

I also just want you to know your message about the importance of a diverse and multicultural community has certainly been received. It's part of what makes me incredibly proud to be Canadian. I think, just speaking for myself and just what I've observed in working with my fellow commissioners in this process and even just the mechanics of it, I'm confident that we are doing things differently than we see in the U.S.

Mary-Anne Williams: That's reassuring.

Mr. Clark: Yeah. But it's equally important that you're here and that you expressed your views. We very much appreciate your doing that.

Dr. Martin: Well, I think the fundamental difference between us and American electoral boundary creation is that they do it with elected politicians. We do it without elected politicians, so it's easier for us to be noncommittal on a lot of these issues. I mean, our requirements are quite specific about the factors we're to look at, the populations that we're allowed to look at, and the variation, high and low. It gives us a lot of latitude to consider what constitutes effective representation in these districts, and effective representation is a very important concept in Canadian law. We're struggling along, but I think we are paying due attention to the needs of the act to provide a balanced approach to building an electoral district.

Mary-Anne Williams: That's reassuring.

The Chair: Any questions for Ms Williams?

Dr. Martin: I don't think so. I think that the philosophical point is the significant one, if I might, and that, you know, we have contemplated gerrymandering, but we're not doing it.

Mary-Anne Williams: Okay. Great.

The Chair: The interesting thing about the points you've raised is that, you know, in a sense we're dwarves sitting on the shoulders of the historic giants. Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia have gone through a lot in the last 40 to 50 years in terms of drawing boundaries, and in that time period or just about that time period the

Charter of Rights came into effect. Section 3 is a constitutional guarantee. The Supreme Court has opined on that, and in their decision there is reference to the American situation, but they've rejected the American one person, one vote system that their Supreme Court has time and again emphasized.

So, yes, you can be proud as a Canadian and you can be proud as an Albertan, and certainly, I think, while it's hard not to watch the news, the last few months have made us all the more grateful for our Canadian birthright.

Mary-Anne Williams: Right.

The Chair: Sorry. That's unnecessary commentary.

Mary-Anne Williams: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Susan, any questions?

Mrs. Samson: Thank you.

Ms Williams, I don't have any questions, but I want you to know that we had slightly over 180 written submissions, and this is week three of us travelling the province and hearing from Albertans. It's been most rewarding because it has given us a better understanding of the actual people who are here in the ridings and how they fit together or how they don't fit together. I truly believe that, with the guidelines that we've been given, we're going to come up with something that is fair and represents the voters and the people of Alberta. It won't please everybody because ridings will change, but it certainly will be to the best that we can do with the tools we've been given.

Thank you.

Mary-Anne Williams: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Evans: I would just comment as follows. I think that we should be cautious about the hysteria that seems to be generated by the media. For myself personally, I think I feel comfortable in trusting in our system, in terms of the government and how it operates. In the long term it seems to always work out, and I think that's the case now. I think the media as a business model needs to incite hysteria, and that's exactly what they do, so I think we should be careful about that.

I'll share with you from the Supreme Court of Canada's decision on the reference of the Saskatchewan case, which really underscores what we're doing here and, you know, has helped to frame our legislation. This is what Justice McLachlin said.

The history or philosophy of Canadian democracy does not suggest that the framers of the Charter in enacting s. 3 had the attainment of voter parity as their ultimate goal. Their goal, rather, was to recognize the right long affirmed in this country to effective representation in a system which gives due weight to voter equity but admits other considerations where necessary. Effective representation and good government in this country compel that factors other than voter parity, such as geography and community interests, be taken into account in setting electoral boundaries. Departures from the Canadian ideal of effective representation, where they exist, will be found to violate s. 3 of the Charter.

There's the protection that allows us to be able to do what needs to be done in terms of adjusting electoral boundaries to reach that ultimate goal of effective representation.

Honestly, we're doing the best we can. We appreciate everyone providing us with information, and thank you for providing us with, you know, the philosophy, the underpinnings of what we're doing. Always a good reminder.

Thank you.

7:20

Mary-Anne Williams: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Williams. You're excused. Please stay in the gallery if there are any other presenters.

Lorraine Robinson.

Mrs. Robinson: Good evening.

The Chair: Good evening.

Mrs. Robinson: Again, thank you. I know we could do written submissions, but it is different when you can do it in person, and just listening to the others speak, it really makes you reflect on the importance of this work.

I'm the president of the Millican Ogden Community Association. When you hear Millican Ogden, it doesn't appear in the city either as a community association or in the electoral – oh, I made a mistake here. We fall under Ogden. Basically, Ogden is this mixture. As you know, Ogden existed before Calgary existed. It came as a result of the CP. Then, of course, the Ogden yards played a critical role during World War II, and then with time you had the lower Ogden that got developed. Millican was actually called Millican Estates, and at one time it was the most expensive land in the city, once we got taken in by the city of Calgary and then, of course, Lynnwood.

I'm here just because it's an opportunity. I thought, well, if for some reason our boundaries get changed and we didn't take the chance to voice our concern, then it'd be rather frustrating, so I figured. I think we're safe where we are, but I felt it was important to take this evening off to be here.

Calgary about 10 years ago decided to group communities together to create local area plans. Our community, Ogden, which is Millican Ogden, got grouped. They divided the city of Calgary into 42 community groupings, and basically you look at the community associations. By the way, our community will be celebrating 70 years in June 2026. We've been around for a long time.

We were grouped in area 34. I highlighted it in yellow over here. Key communities with us are Riverbend, Quarry Park, and DouglasGlen. This is important in this presentation because you'll see that this area for communities: we're all part of the provincial riding of Calgary-Peigan. The city saw that we fell well into this grouping, and it's also the grouping for the electoral boundary of Calgary-Peigan. Like I said, it has Ogden, Riverbend, Quarry Park, DouglasGlen, in addition to Douglasdale, and the north part of McKenzie Lake. Again, for us it's important that we remain in this grouping, so I'm here on behalf of MOCA as president of the Millican Ogden Community Association just to indicate the importance for us to continue being in that grouping.

Also, we're all southeast ward. When you look at the wards in Calgary, there are a lot of northeast communities that are also grouped with us, but in the area plan that the city has now laid out, as well as with Calgary-Peigan, these are the communities we're with. Also, most of these communities are all on that line of the green line which is coming through, so we also have that in common.

Based on that, then, it's just to say that if there are reviews and boundary changes to be made, it is our hope, our community association, that Ogden will remain where we're at.

Just to add, we remain very grateful. We're very fortunate with the MLA that we do have. It is MLA Tanya Fir. She's very, very present, so she's well known in our community. She shows up. We're doing our second annual chili cook-off during Stampede. A

big sponsor is herself, and she is present. She'll appear at some of our MOCA general meetings. The last one was this past April. We had the Love Ogden Day activity, where a member of the community just decided: hey, there are some people that don't have the means to fix areas outside of their house, their steps or their landscaping, et cetera, so she found over 30 volunteers to come and work at 13 different homes. Our MLA was there, very impressed. Then, of course, Brian's Café, very unique, in the Mustard Seed Hub 29, created by a family who lost their son to suicide, so she was there. We're having the soapbox car rally this Saturday, and she'll be there as well to officially open it up.

Like I said, I think we're safe staying where we are, but there was an opportunity to come and speak, so I took advantage of it. I'm done.

The Chair: Thank you very much, ma'am. I appreciate someone that's deeply involved in a community association, in a group that I'm somewhat familiar. I have family that live in the Ogden area and have lived there for years.

Mrs. Robinson: We're pretty committed people in MOCA.

The Chair: Yeah. I hadn't heard of MOCA. I thought it was a specialty coffee, but now I know otherwise.

Okay. Any questions from the commissioners? Mr. Evans.

Mr. Evans: Thank you. Okay. Where exactly is the Millican Ogden Community Association located on the map?

Mrs. Robinson: He'll bring it up. So if this was enlarged, it's the whole city of Calgary.

We're a unique community. We're in the southeast, but we're bound. We've got Deerfoot, the river. We've got the train.

Mr. Evans: Is it right in that Ogden area, or is it moved towards Riverbend? Where's the community centre located?

Mrs. Robinson: It's in Lynnwood, up the hill. I have a hard time reading maps, but this looks like 66th Avenue. Then our community hall would be about here. Is that correct? Yeah. CP. Yeah, we go up 18th Street, so it's over here.

Of course, this is Lynnview Ridge overseeing the river. That's where there would have been in the past some Imperial Oil issues. Then down, of course, we've got the Ogden yards. Ogden and Millican rises are in there.

Mr. Evans: So everything on 52nd Street Southeast, going east: is that all industrial?

Mrs. Robinson: Yeah. We've got the whole Foothills industrial. Where would it go? Okay. CP. I know that the industrial is, like, over here.

Mr. Evans: Or is it even at Barlow Trail?

Mrs. Robinson: Well, you have access to the industrial from Barlow Trail. We don't have Barlow Trail up there, so Peigan Trail. There's a whole big industrial area. They have the big film studio, lots of business. That also belongs in ward 9. We're ward 9 for Calgary. That whole Foothills area is there.

Mr. Evans: Is all your population really, then, Barlow Trail west to the river?

Mrs. Robinson: I'm not seeing – oh, okay. Barlow Trail is there. Right, yeah. We don't have anyone in Barlow Trail. Really, 69th

Avenue – you see? – and the CP Rail: we're all on this. The residential is all over here. Like, nothing over there.

Mr. Evans: Right. Are there any residential developments that you're aware of?

Mrs. Robinson: We're a very, very old community. What's happening to a lot of the Calgary communities that are very old right now, with the blanket rezoning, is that you have developers coming in and buying some of the very old homes, and all of a sudden you're having townhomes with four units, eight units coming up. So that's a common trend that's happening in a lot of the older communities. We voice our frustration because we question the infrastructure. Is it there? And then it's changing the landscape.

It was a very, you know, typical bungalow style; very old communities. Many of those homes have been passed on from generations. Like, you can have up to four generations of a family living in our community. So there's that frustration. I'm sure if you have other older communities that do come and speak, you're probably hearing a lot of that frustration on how the look of the community is changing, and we have no control. We do get the development permits to review as a community association, but blanket rezoning doesn't – our impact has been taken away.

7:30

Mr. Evans: Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Susan?

Mrs. Samson: Thank you. Mrs. Robinson, you're fortunate in your riding that it hasn't shown a tremendous amount of growth.

Mrs. Robinson: No, and we would have lost lots with the Imperial Oil buyout.

Mrs. Samson: Right. But the communities around you, in particular Calgary-Hays to the south of you: you might very well, in Calgary-Peigan, see one or some communities move up into your area just so that we get a balancing of ridings of equal size as opposed to some really small ones and some really big ones.

Your presentation was most informative.

Mrs. Robinson: Thank you.

The Chair: Can you answer this query of mine? When you referenced Imperial Oil, it brought to mind – that was quite a while ago. Those homes: have they been flattened? What's happened in that area?

Mrs. Robinson: In the big interior – I live in Lynnview Ridge. I'm in one of those homes. I'm one of those residents that chose to stay when Alberta Environment had Imperial clean to the standard that – the 11 remaining residents all have our letter from Alberta Environment to say that our land is at a level of the Alberta standard for property. Out of those 11 on the ridge, it seems like there's an empty lot in between each one of us. So if you drive Deerfoot and you look up, those were houses that they did buy and remove, and across the street close to 200 homes were all removed. They were collapsed. Then coming up on Lynnview Road there were some townhouses that all got demolished.

The Chair: Okay. So a small minority state.

Mrs. Robinson: Eleven of us.

The Chair: Yeah. Okay.

Mrs. Robinson: Or 11 households.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you. And thank you for your presentation. Dr. Martin, any questions?

Mrs. Robinson: Thanks.

Dr. Martin: Thank you. I am interested in the effects of the oil company's withdrawal. Did you say that the lands that they had been using went through environmental review and things like that?

Mrs. Robinson: Oh, yeah. The remediation was very, very detailed for us that stayed up on the ridge, the levels that they had to clean. Across it wasn't as aggressive, but it remains an open park. The city of Calgary has a lease, a 100-year lease, so it's an open park space.

Dr. Martin: Do you anticipate that pod being opened up for residential construction?

Mrs. Robinson: Well, Imperial Oil came in and did some testing last summer. We're curious to see why that was done. We tried to get information from our ward, and we're not getting any information, so who knows?

Dr. Martin: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much for coming in. Again, it's always so helpful to have folks who live in those communities. I mean, even if you're from Calgary, you know the city, it's always a bit – until you actually talk to someone who lives in that neighbourhood, you don't get a sense of it. So thank you very much for being here.

I look at Glenmore Trail, and I always feel like Glenmore Trail is kind of a big boundary, right?

Mrs. Robinson: Right.

Mr. Clark: Also, that happens to be the ward boundary – right? – between you and – what is the community south of you, you said?

Mrs. Robinson: Riverbend. Riverbend used to be in ward 9. Then when they did a review, they removed Riverbend and . . .

Mr. Clark: Right. So Riverbend is in ward 11.

Mrs. Robinson: Yeah.

Mr. Clark: It sounds like you tend to sort of think to the south, but do you ever sort of go across the river or north a little bit, often to the other side, I guess, where the other Ogden yard is? I mean, it's all industrial over there, but do you have a connection that way as well?

Mrs. Robinson: With the industrial yards? No. You know, you have to drive there. They're not involved with our community association. Well, we're working with Evraz Navajo because they have their pipe-making production, and now when they drop the pipes, they clang. And with the green line coming, they've made a tunnel – 69th Avenue, here, was the access to go into CP. Years ago when the new CP president came in, he said: well, it's ridiculous that in downtown we're paying to rent space when we have all that space, so they came and built huge offices, a gym, a cafeteria, and all. But the access really is 69th, and you have to cross the track, so it's a pain. Working with the city with the green line: that's coming right along. Then on 78th they've made a tunnel to go through, and that's going to close off. So then people will access the industrial area and the CP through a tunnel on 76th. With that tunnel now open, people living here hear the clanking of the pipes, so we're

working with Evraz and the green line to see if something can be done to mitigate that sound.

Mr. Clark: Okay. That's helpful. Thank you.

The Chair: Now, ma'am, I'm not sure you were here at the beginning when we went through some figures in terms of mean averages of each constituency. The average is 55,600, and you're right close to that.

Mrs. Robinson: In Calgary-Peigan?

The Chair: Yeah. You're at 52,103.

Mrs. Robinson: In all these communities, really, the growth has come and gone. Ogden and Riverbend. The growth that's happening now is not really growth; it's really knocking down older homes.

The Chair: Right, but it is going to create growth.

Mrs. Robinson: Oh, yeah. You'll increase population because, you know, you had the one house; now you might have four units with four suites.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much, Mrs. Robinson. You're more than welcome to stay to hear other presentations.

Is Althea Adams present? No.

Okay. Ian Walker.

Ian Walker: Hello.

The Chair: Good evening.

Ian Walker: Good evening. I may have misunderstood the purpose of these meetings, and I certainly don't have a presentation. I saw this as an opportunity for feedback when I saw that the meetings were being held.

The Chair: Just identify yourself and tell us which electoral division you're in.

Ian Walker: My name is Ian Walker. I live in Calgary-Elbow. I guess I wanted to express a few things. One was, you know, thanks for doing this. I think a lot of effort and time goes into this, and I appreciate your willingness to come out and hear from people.

I have no particular thoughts about Calgary-Elbow per se. I guess my plea or my request of you is that we think about electoral districts in terms of more than just geographic boundaries, right? Things that seem like natural boundaries – and I just heard somebody refer to Glenmore Trail as this natural boundary – there's nothing inherently natural about a freeway, much like there's nothing naturally bounding about the Elbow River, right? It's very easy to look down the Elbow River and say: okay, that's a nice clean dividing line. But if we think about districting in terms of its power to enfranchise or disenfranchise people, I guess my biggest worry with redistricting, and I've seen no real signs that it happens in Canada, is the tendency towards partisan gerrymandering, right?

7:40

If I had one request of the committee and your group, it's simply that we really resist any efforts to think about boundaries as they apply to political advantage. Those things will change over time, they are not necessarily as helpful as we think they are, but what they do do is disenfranchise people in a systematic way and take away their democratic rights and their ability to participate meaningfully in society. I think it is an incredibly harmful, insidious

practice, and I just wanted to support the fact that we don't seem to do that in Canada and make the plea that we continue not to.

When I think about how you put boundaries together: is it about creating areas that have natural commonalities? So similar concerns, similar demographics, perhaps similar worries, right? If you wind up with districts that are 70 per cent people that live in an urban environment and 30 per cent people that live in a rural environment, those 30 per cent of people become disenfranchised by that in the ability to have somebody who truly represents their voice.

When I think about things like the Elbow River as a boundary, people who live on one side of the Elbow River and the other side of the Elbow River probably have similar concerns and similar issues that they struggle with and similar requests of their representatives and of government. So I would suggest that we think about demographics as much as geography.

That's the extent of it. I'm much less sophisticated than the last speaker.

The Chair: No, no. You focused on an issue that's important. Too bad you weren't here at 6:30, because we had a bit of an introduction about the system and had some great conversations. So I do encourage you to go back and look at the transcripts, but thank you for that reminder.

Any thoughts, questions, Mr. Clark?

Mr. Clark: Just to reiterate, I think we do. You may have been here earlier when I mentioned that this commission, this panel does things a little differently than the way the Americans do and that the Canadian concept is just different, which is good, but I think your point is taken.

I guess I just want to dig down a little bit deeper on – you mentioned mixing rural and urban and then people who have kind of common interests in a community. Can you maybe just dig a little deeper into what you mean?

Ian Walker: Yeah. I've been thinking about it a lot for the last few days as I've been sort of preparing to come here. And, I mean, I think it is fraught, right? The easy distinction in Alberta is rural-urban. It's clear that people in those environments have perhaps different focuses, different concerns, but the same is true of people of higher income brackets and lower income brackets who live within half a kilometre of each other within the urban environment. The same risks exist there of limiting the voice of some subsections of our society. Balanced against that, though, is the fact that we can't just keep cutting the pie thinner and thinner and creating advocacy groups disguised as electoral districts or polls within electoral districts.

I'm not sure what the solution is, and I'm sure that the group of you have far more experience and have thought about this far more than I have, but I just wanted to put that concern on record so that it was there, noted for people who make these decisions. That was my only goal in coming today.

Mr. Clark: Mission accomplished. Thank you.

The Chair: Dr. Martin?

Dr. Martin: Thank you. And thank you. Very logical. A couple of weeks ago we were in southern Alberta, and a rancher who lives very close up tight on the foothills suggested that a community of interest was a paramount consideration and that it should be just the people in his town. This is rather the extreme condition, as it were, of how to build a coherent community of interest. Well, the effect of that is that we'd have 870 ridings.

Obviously, we have to do better than that. That's why we're probing all the time about the housing stock, communities of interest rather more broadly understood, and what constitutes a neighbourhood. These are all rather difficult and slippery, but that's the way we are probing where communities of interest may lie because just looking at the map isn't going to tell us. You know, in each of these factors that the legislation asks us to look at, with the exception of the overall population, each of them goes so far but not all the way, so we end up juggling four or five factors simultaneously. I hope that you will understand that we're doing our best, and you could pray for us because it's a tough one.

Ian Walker: I appreciate that, and I think that that's true. I think it's also a conceit to think that singular communities are monoliths – right? – in terms of how they think and what their concerns are even if they have, you know, identical demographics or familial histories, whatever.

I guess the plea is that, you know, if you're looking at a map that superimposes familial income on postal codes and you've got a pocket within Calgary that has lower income, there may be value in trying to keep that pocket together rather than if it borders or if it's in an area that could potentially border on two or three districts, right? If you slice it up into four chunks and send four pieces of that community into different corners, those people lose their voice functionally. It becomes very easy to not worry about campaigning in that area because it's only 6 per cent of our district or 8 per cent of our district, so we don't need to worry too much about them.

If you keep them together, they become a more sizable block. I agree. They may still not be monolithic in terms of how they think, but it does force the political parties to engage with that community because it forms a significant portion of whatever swing district it may be, right? We all know that swing districts get more attention from political parties. It's a way of leveraging that.

I appreciate how complicated your job is and thank you for doing it.

Dr. Martin: Thank you.

The Chair: Well, you'll be able to give us a report card after our interim report is completed. Look at it, and then maybe come back and speak to us in the second round.

Susan?

Mrs. Samson: Thank you. Mr. Walker, thanks for coming out. Interesting points. I wanted to say that what I am tasked with and one of the tools I'm given is that when the electoral districts are changed or drawn up, they must have clear and understandable boundaries. We've heard from the public how difficult that can be when boundaries change, the chaos that comes with it. They go to the poll to vote, and it isn't just a matter of pop over five minutes later. When you go to the wrong poll and you're told that it's not the right one and you don't know where the right one is, and maybe you've walked or got a ride – you know what I'm saying.

7:50

When we talk about boundaries, sometimes those roads, those unnatural things are clear and understandable. They're probably one of the most common ways to have boundaries. I think one of the most important things that I've found over the last three weeks of travelling is that I live in Sylvan Lake, and I don't know Calgary like the people in this room that know Calgary and have shared with us what they've seen right in their own communities. That will greatly assist us in the decisions that we make, and that is so valuable and so important. We're not done yet, but when we are

done, it'll be based on what we heard or what you wrote to us. Really, thank you, on your part, for doing it.

Ian Walker: At the end of the day, I certainly defer to your judgment – right? – and your expertise. I just wanted to put my voice out there. Thank you very much for your time.

Mrs. Samson: You bet. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.
Mr. Evans?

Mr. Evans: Yes. Now that you're here, I'm going to use you as a resource – okay? – because you've got insight into your community that's going to be helpful, so I'm going to drill down on a few things.

First, the relevant considerations according to the legislation are that we're supposed to be looking in terms of determining effective representation as, first, sparsity, density, and rate of growth of the populations; second, communities of interest; third, geographic features; fourth, the availability and means of communication and transportation between the various parts of Alberta; fifth, the desirability of understandable and clear boundaries, and that's what Susan was talking about; and the catch-all, any other factors the commission considers appropriate. What I want to glean from you is on that point.

I would like you to think about any other factors we as a commission should be thinking about, but I want you to think about your riding, so Calgary-Elbow. What are the other factors that we should be thinking about as it relates to your riding and then, if you would like and if you can provide anything for us, any other factors that maybe we should apply to Alberta as a whole? You're here. You're a resource. I'm going to mine you.

Ian Walker: It's a shallow mine.

Mr. Evans: There's a diamond in there. I know it.

Ian Walker: I'm just thinking about it.

Mr. Evans: Let me help you out. You were focusing in and you talked about: we should be looking at demographics. People will understand that differently. For example, Dr. Julian would give you the exact, specific definition. I'm not going to be able to. What I'm more interested in is what you think it means, and then we can take that information and apply it to Calgary-Elbow.

Ian Walker: When I think about demographics, I think about income, other measures of social privilege, education.

Mr. Evans: Socioeconomic factors.

Ian Walker: Yeah.

Mr. Evans: Okay.

Ian Walker: Family size, educational background, you know, one-income versus two-income families.

Mr. Evans: Let's apply that to your electoral district. How would we group the different communities within that community group? Ultimately, at the end of the day, we're probably going to be ending up with some sort of community-of-interest component, right?

Ian Walker: Yeah. It's interesting. I mean, Calgary-Elbow is a bit interesting in the sense that it, you know, includes some very well-heeled areas in and around the Elbow River, Elbow Park, east

Elbow, but then it extends up into Lower Mount Royal, which is full of relatively affordable low-rise apartment buildings. It extends over into Erlton – or not Erlton. Oh, it does, doesn't it? It includes part of Erlton, yeah. Sorry; looking at my previous MLA.

It is a bit of a mixed bag, right? I think that largely the perception is that that riding is driven by its more affluent areas, but there is this fairly sizable lower socioeconomic status population within that riding. If I were to think about, you know, if there were going to be an addition into Calgary-Elbow, like, say that just to balance the numbers you had to expand it a little bit and you had the potential to, and the area that was being brought in was a lower income area and you were thinking about bringing it in versus putting it in another riding that was perhaps more uniformly high income . . .

Mr. Evans: Can you show me on the map what you would take, what you would add in?

Ian Walker: Oh, I haven't – not really. I hadn't been that granular in my thinking about it, to be honest. My thoughts were more philosophical. I was going to leave the logistics to the experts.

Mr. Evans: See; once you sat down, I told you I was going to mine you. Our philosophical threshold is just one, and that was taken up.

Ian Walker: Yeah. If you look at – let me just get my bearings here. Sorry.

Mr. Evans: What would you do with Lakeview, which is at the bottom?

Ian Walker: Yeah. I see it. Like down in here, you mean?

Mr. Evans: No. Over to the – you're right there.

Ian Walker: The south end is Crowchild. Yeah.

Mr. Evans: Or Glamorgan?

Ian Walker: You know, if I'm being granular and you're asking me – again, I say this with full deference to your expertise, not mine – demographically, I would say, just based on where my kids play basketball, the clubs they're involved with, where their friends are who went to the same school, that sort of thing . . .

Mr. Evans: Exactly.

Ian Walker: That area, for instance, is much more demographically similar to this area than this area.

Mr. Evans: Okay. What about Glamorgan?

Ian Walker: Probably somewhere in between. But, again, you know, it's one of those questions, right? Say you had this area that needed a new home. Bringing that area into Calgary-Elbow, I'm not sure how much of a voice those people get.

Mr. Evans: Right.

Ian Walker: Because their interests might be probably quite different than the people who live, you know, a mile away as the crow flies.

Mr. Evans: What about the empty space between Glamorgan and Altadore?

Ian Walker: You're talking about in here?

Mr. Evans: Yeah.

Ian Walker: I'm just trying to think what that is. That's Currie Barracks in there, isn't it?

Mrs. Samson: I think you might be right.

Ian Walker: I think that's Currie Barracks in there.

Mrs. Naz: Mount Royal University.

Ian Walker: MRU, I think, is actually . . .

Mr. Evans: In the middle area in there.

Mrs. Naz: Oh, okay.

Mr. Evans: Between Glamorgan and . . .

Ian Walker: Yeah. That's MRU. It's down there.

That also is probably very demographically similar, right? I think about where my kids' friends are, when they go to school, where I go pick them up. That seems like a very arbitrary distinction there in terms of being separate.

Mr. Evans: Okay.

Well, thank you, Mr. Walker. That's been very helpful. I appreciate it. Appreciate your help.

Ian Walker: I think you're being generous, but thank you for your time.

The Chair: Mr. Walker, thank you for coming, and please don't tell any future presenters that we interrogated you so much.

I believe that's all the presenters unless Naomi Salisbury or Althea Adams are present. Okay.

Mr. Evans: Well, after that interrogation they probably left.

The Chair: Yeah.

Well, thank you, everyone, for coming this evening and presenting. We know that on days like today you've got tons of other things to do, but your interest in civil engagement and the political process is so important. Thank you so much.

We will reconvene the public hearing starting tomorrow afternoon in Brooks, Alberta.

[The hearing adjourned at 8 p.m.]

