



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission  
Public Hearings

Calgary

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9:01 a.m.

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**Legislative Assembly of Alberta**

**Electoral Boundaries Commission**

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## **Electoral Boundaries Commission Public Hearings – Calgary**

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Amelia Kiddle

Jim Ridley

Irfan Sabir, MLA, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall

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Alex Shevalier, President, Calgary & District Labour Council

Graham Sucha

Kelli Taylor

Richard Warnock, Mayor, Town of Sundre



9:01 a.m.

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

[Justice Miller in the chair]

**The Chair:** Good morning, everyone. You now again are welcome for this morning's session. This is the third day of our second round of hearings for the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission. The commission representatives are noted on the screen, and you can see our name tags. If you wish to see any background information, you can go to the commission's website.

Our task as a commission, which was started back in April of 2025, was to deal with two things: basically, the expansion of the Legislative Assembly from 87 electoral divisions to 89. The main reason the legislation was changed was because of the very significant population increase that Alberta has experienced since the last electoral boundaries report in 2017. As you know, voters in an electoral division actually select their individual MLA to serve them in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Every two election cycles the government strikes an electoral boundary commission pursuant to the legislation.

The population has increased substantially since the last report was conducted back in 2017. I'm going to be using very rough numbers, but it has increased by slightly over 800,000 people. In 2017 the population was just over 4 million, and in 2025 we are using a population base of 4.88 million. To give you some context as to the average voters in each electoral division, in 2017, based on the population at that time and the number of ridings, it was 46,697 per electoral division. That's not our target; that's just the average. The target population per division is a range that fluctuates from minus 25 per cent of the average to plus 25 per cent of the average. You can see that range on the screen. This time around, the average population per electoral division is just under 55,000, and the targeted range, as you can see, is from 41,000 to almost 69,000.

The task of this Electoral Boundaries Commission is to hear from Albertans both orally through public presentations like we're having today and through written communication and come up with an electoral map that provides for effective representation across the province. That is easier said than done, I can assure you.

Since our appointment in April we spent our time doing the following things. First of all, we looked at the data source for the population. We spent some time with statisticians, and we arrived at an agreed upon data source. That background and information can be found in our report, pages 15 to 18, and that is based on the latest decennial census for Statistics Canada, which is regularly updated by the Office of Statistics and Information by the Alberta Treasury Board.

Then we reviewed hundreds of written submissions that were presented to us throughout May, June, July, and onwards. In May and June we conducted public hearings, and we travelled the province, heard presentations from Albertans in the north, central, south, and in the larger urban centres.

After that public hearing season was completed, we spent a tremendous amount of time with officials from Elections Alberta and their map department and checked out how we could properly allocate the boundaries given the limitations we have in terms of the range. We did that for all 89 proposed boundaries. That ultimately resulted in the report that is on our website. You can see the cover. That interim report was completed and provided to the Speaker of the Legislature in late October. Immediately all MLAs in the Legislature received a copy.

As we prepared this report, we covered many of the factors laid out in the legislation that allowed us to come up with an effective representation goal. Our goal, in the end, was to make sure that

there was effective representation and that there are understandable and clear boundaries. Then, in response to our report that was tabled in late October, we opened a portal for public submissions from early November to December 19. We got public submissions, over 1,100 written submissions, that I believe are now all on the public website as well so the public can access them.

Now, at this stage of our commission's life, we are back for a second round of public hearings, and this is the third day we've been in Calgary. We've got a busy last two days. We're here till noon, and then we move up to Edmonton to commence virtual hearings tomorrow and Friday and then in-person hearings in Edmonton starting on Monday. Once we conclude those public hearings, we will start deliberating as a commission, and we will work to have a report completed and able to be tabled by the deadline of late March of this year.

We're at a point now where we want to hear from the public again in response. I am going to call on our first presenter, who I believe is here. Just so everyone knows, there is a time limit. We are going to be adhering to the time for presentation fairly strictly today because we want to get up to Edmonton in daylight.

I'll call on the first speaker, Mr. Alexander Shevalier. Make yourself comfortable and tell us what riding you're from and what riding or ridings or electoral divisions you wish to speak to.

**Mr. Shevalier:** My name is Alex Shevalier. I'm president of the Calgary & District Labour Council. I live in Calgary-Currie, but I will be speaking more generally about the report.

On behalf of our 50,000 members, we just wanted to thank you for doing the thankless work and hugging the cactus of doing this unenviable task.

**The Chair:** I'm going to use that one.

**Mr. Shevalier:** In reading the interim report, we think you reached the ever-elusive effective representation, and we support your interim report's recommendations. I think you struck the right balance between urban and rural tensions. We think you did a really good job. We support the report, and we don't see any need for any changes.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

**Mr. Evans:** We're done.

**The Chair:** Yeah.

Let me be the devil's advocate, though. We've received, and you no doubt would have – well, no, if your members are only in Calgary.

**Mr. Shevalier:** Calgary and district, so Airdrie south, High River north, to the B.C. and Saskatchewan border.

**The Chair:** We've received tremendous negative feedback for taking an electoral division out of the north.

**Mr. Shevalier:** Okay.

**The Chair:** That poses a huge problem for effective representation, so we've got to look at that. What do you say to someone who I think earlier this week said that the southern boundary of the northern riding that we created is closer to the U.S. border than it is to the N.W.T border? In other words, the electoral division is very, very large geographically. How can someone provide effective representation traversing such a vast distance? I'm using you as a sparring partner here in this process.

**Mr. Shevalier:** The legislation does allow for, I believe, four special districts, if I'm remembering correctly, which allow for a variation of up to 50 per cent. I can't comment on this one because I didn't look, but in the last one we had two, and one of them was the same size as the country of Serbia, if I'm remembering correctly, because I looked.

**9:10**

**The Chair:** Yeah. That's a good point. We actually are using less in our interim report. I hope you appreciate that we may have to make some changes.

**Mr. Shevalier:** I don't live in northern Alberta and I can't appreciate the struggles because not only is everything more expensive, they don't have access to effective Internet. Those are considerations you have to make. The only problem I see is the rippling effect because then you're going to have to change every other riding.

**The Chair:** That's the hugging of the cactus that you referenced.

**Mr. Shevalier:** That's the hugging of the cactus.

Because you create another special one, then you push every other boundary to become larger. Depending on how large you make one of the special boundaries, it doesn't take long for it to get into some very odd consequences. I seem to remember at the end of the last process that we had Fort McMurray-Conklin, which had, I think, 19,000 people in it near the end, and we had Calgary-South East, which had 119,000 people in it. We got into some very, very odd situations where you had places where one vote was worth six times another situation. The hugging the cactus part, yes, and I appreciate that the legislation allows for that, so the ripple effects are going to be the complicated part.

**The Chair:** Yeah, you're right. There's a cascading effect.

Let me ask you this because you've obviously looked at this seriously. Another option we have is hybrid or blended ridings. We've heard a lot about that this week. That is a legitimate tool that we have.

**Mr. Shevalier:** I believe you've created 18 of them already, though.

**The Chair:** Right. We've had, I think . . .

**Dr. Martin:** They already were there.

**The Chair:** We had about 13 or 14 or 15 up until this time around, and we added a few more. What are your thoughts on more hybrids?

**Mr. Shevalier:** My only concern with hybrids is: do they share a community of interest? I'll use the example of: my brother lives in Strathmore; I live in Calgary. They come into Calgary to shop, but they generally will stay in their communities to live and do every other thing. So the community of interest, because they don't have transit links – within Calgary you don't really leave. So do the hybrids share that community of interest? I don't know that they do.

**The Chair:** You've touched on the essence of the problem, yes.

**Mr. Evans:** Can I ask a question?

**The Chair:** Yeah. Mr. Evans, start.

**Mr. Evans:** When we think about hybrids and looking at the legislation, to me they just are different conglomerations of communities of interest, right? I think that where we've gone maybe a little awry with respect to looking at communities of

interest is we jump to a point and we say, "Well, they don't have transit issues," but they do have transit issues. They're just slightly different. They both want to go from A to B. How do they get there? So it's always an amelioration of those issues, and that's no different with respect to purely urban. There'll be communities of interest within those electoral divisions that have different interests.

What I'm interested to hear from you is: what about the communities of interest that are somewhat different? Let's say rural and urban, so a hybrid riding. What would be their homogeneous interests that they would all have? I think we jump quickly to what the difference is, and it might be one thing. We don't think about the 15 items that are all homogeneous in terms of their issues and interests. We'll use the example that you brought up with your brother. We'll say he's a rural community of interest and you're an urban community of interest. What are the similarities? What are the interests that you share in common, rather than focusing on the differences?

**Mr. Shevalier:** We share a lot in common in terms of, like, wanting community safety. We share a lot in wanting – I don't know – more hospitals, better health care.

Just to backpedal, in creating hybrid ridings, my argument to you would simply be that Airdrie and Cochrane share more in common than somebody between Airdrie and Calgary because in terms of economic development it's often that, unfortunately, we're pitted against each other. Like, the cities and rural Alberta have tried to not compete with each other in terms of economic development, but it will inevitably happen. For example, rural Alberta in terms of land costs is cheaper than the city of Calgary, and there are pluses and minuses in every category. I think we share a lot in common, but if we're talking about counties and reeves, the economic development and the services provided are just different because they don't provide the same services or the same level of services.

**Mr. Evans:** Aren't they all meeting the same needs, though? I guess I want to ask you this question. I think you agree with me or we're in agreement that most things are in common. Some things are different. And then would it be a weighting of those differences in terms of how important they would be in distinguishing one from another?

**Mr. Shevalier:** Sure. I'm simply reminded that, like, the overarching consideration is rough equity in terms of size as well and that, unfortunately, demography . . .

**The Chair:** Size being geography or population?

**Mr. Shevalier:** No, no. Not geography. In terms of vote parity. And in this case, unfortunately, demography is destiny.

**Mr. Evans:** What about voter eligibility? Have you considered the impact of voter eligibility?

**Mr. Shevalier:** Well, that's not what the legislation contemplates, though.

**Mr. Evans:** Does it?

**Mr. Shevalier:** No. If they'd wanted to say "citizen," they would have, but they didn't.

**Mr. Evans:** Fourteen (f), other factors?

**The Chair:** Well, maybe let somebody else engage here. Mrs. Samson, any questions?

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Hey. The second speaker isn't here, so you're not leaving early, so you know.

**Mrs. Samson:** I can't help you out on that, Justice Miller.

I read your submission. Did you make an in-person submission as well?

**Mr. Shevalier:** I believe I did.

**Mrs. Samson:** Yeah. So I feel like I have already quizzed you, and I want to thank you for your appreciation of the work we put out.

**Mr. Shevalier:** Yeah. This is not my first boundary commission.

**Mrs. Samson:** Yeah. It doesn't sound like it. You're well informed. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you, and again thank you for your letter. I mean, it's very clear that it's very thoughtfully prepared by you and your colleagues. Obviously, I thank you for the fact that you're sensitive to the dilemmas that we juggle, hybrids being just one of them, one of many, and the difficulties we have now, because my colleague has been speaking of it. You know, you can have large populations but static or declining eligible voter populations, which is, I think, what he's alluding to under "any other factors." Certainly, the Supreme Court cases dwell upon equity for voters, and rightly so.

**Mr. Shevalier:** Yeah. I would simply also supplement that the Supreme Court has said it, but the legislation also contemplates it. The Supreme Court said that overriding it is rough equity of votes, and then you can consider other factors after that, and I think the legislation reflects that reality as well.

**Dr. Martin:** Our provincial legislation focuses on population, so you have two different directives without any clear indication of how they connect.

**Mr. Shevalier:** Well, no. I think when we focus on population, you're dealing with today, but you also have to contemplate tomorrow because somebody who's 17 today can't vote but in one year they can, so that changes. That's why you have to contemplate the future a little bit in determining these boundaries because, again, we don't want to get into a Fort McMurray-Conklin versus Calgary-South East situation again.

9:20

**Dr. Martin:** Well, those are two good examples of gross extremes, and we want to avoid all that, but it still remains the case that we have difficulties in balancing all these factors. That's what you allude to, I guess, as grasping the cactus.

**Mr. Shevalier:** Thank you for hugging the cactus.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you.

**Mr. Evans:** I like cactuses.

**Mr. Clark:** If you don't mind, can I . . .

**The Chair:** Please.

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you. Sorry.

I've got a few things I'd like to ask. You've obviously done a lot of research on this stuff, and we really appreciate that because you

obviously appreciate the challenge we have. I'll just ask, on the question of voters or citizens compared to population as our key criteria, are you aware of any other boundary commissions in Canada or the provinces or any academic research that would say voters or citizens are the criteria versus population, or do commissions use population in your research?

**Mr. Shevalier:** I did not look at other boundary commissions because you're bound by Alberta legislation and by precedent.

**Mr. Clark:** I'll say that I haven't found any myself, but if anybody out there listening has, please let me know because I'm curious about that.

I'm also interested. My friend down the way talked about communities of interest, and we think a lot about that as it relates to the legislation and also our challenge here. What would you say if I said: well, the city of Calgary is a community of interest, downtown Calgary is the economic heart of the city of Calgary, and therefore we should draw constituencies that look like a wagon wheel? Every one of 20-plus constituencies touches downtown in some way; that's going to be an appropriate blending of the interests of the city of Calgary.

**Mr. Shevalier:** You're entering into some natural boundary questions.

**Mr. Clark:** Fair. Let's just pretend Calgary is built on a perfectly flat bed of prairie east of where it currently sits and we could do that. Would you feel that's fair?

**Mr. Shevalier:** Okay. I'm going to get a little nerdy. The city of Calgary contemplated that. They contemplated doing it for their wards so that everybody had a little bit of a stake in terms of the success or failure of the downtown, and they didn't end up doing it. I can't remember the rationale now. They did not end up doing it because I think then you end up splitting up communities in ways that are not good. Part of your contemplation is – like, I live in Bankview, and if somebody were to split up Bankview, then it makes it very difficult for voters to figure out who their MLA is and how to vote. Communities evolve over time. It's not as if we live in – it also ends up looking odd in terms of the boundaries. You know, I don't want to make it look like we're gerrymandering in any way.

**Mr. Clark:** That's great. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentation and for letting us dialogue and converse in such a way.

**Mr. Shevalier:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Our next presenter is Samir Kayande. Please come forward. We don't want you to get comfortable back there. You have to sit up here. Please make yourself comfortable and tell us which electoral division you are from.

**Member Kayande:** All right. Thank you so much for the opportunity to present. My name is Samir Kayande, and I'm the MLA for Calgary-Elbow. I presented in front of you prior to the interim report being published.

I want to first start off by thanking you all for your incredible hard work. I didn't realize fully until I saw the first interim report just how much work, how much thought that you'd put into this. I know, speaking on behalf of all of my constituents, the people of Alberta were incredibly grateful for your work.

That said, I have quibbles, and I thought that we'd just jump right into it. I believe I only have, like, 10 minutes, right?

**The Chair:** Probably less.

**Member Kayande:** Probably less. Okay.

The biggest issue that I see with the map thematically is that Edmonton and Calgary remain underrepresented. I'm looking at appendix E from your report, and the average Edmonton riding is 3 and a half per cent above the overall population variance. That seems small, but when you aggregate over an entire city, what that means is that Edmonton is actually something like .75 seats below where it should be. So there is a real case to be made that – you know, how that's managed is, of course, something I leave in your very capable hands. But the elimination of the Edmonton-Riverview riding, for example, actually contributes to Edmonton continuing to be underrepresented, which has been the case for, I believe, many, many years now. It just means that the voices of Edmonton city voters count for less.

Calgary is less of a problem. Where I believe Calgary remains underrepresented is in the fact that it's not adjusted for future growth. That's how we get a situation, which is very unfortunate, where Calgary-Buffalo was at a 40 per cent variance, for example. I don't think anybody wants that to happen. One way to prevent that is preloading, basically. You know, making sure that both Edmonton and Calgary have an extra seat and in so doing ensuring that these cities remain properly represented.

Just to tie that off, the only other region of the province that you broke down in appendix E where there's a substantial variance exceeding that of Edmonton's is the north, which has a negative 10 per cent variance. Basically, what that means is that the north has an extra seat. That means that the average northern voter's voice counts for 1.1 times. Actually, it counts for – I'm doing my math in my head – about 1.2 times that of the Edmonton voter, and I don't think, frankly, that that's what the intent of the legislation is.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much, sir. If I can just jump in, your analysis is bang on if all we were worried about is Calgary and Edmonton. It's bang on if we were on a one person, one vote system. That is not the case, as you know. We do not have representation by population in this country, never had. No jurisdiction has. Our task is effective representation.

Let me throw out a scenario because you've obviously studied this. Earlier this week – we haven't verified it, but let's assume it's correct. The proposed division we have for northern Alberta: the southern border of that electoral division is closer to Montana than it is to the Northwest Territories. You're a member of the Legislature. How can a member of the Legislature traverse that kind of distance and provide effective representation? That's the conundrum we're faced with.

**Member Kayande:** It is a very real conundrum, and I agree that effective representation is the legislation. It is the law. It's what you're tasked to . . .

**The Chair:** I'm pushing back a little bit not only . . .

**Member Kayande:** Yeah. The jurisprudence is very clear that effective representation is complex, and it includes a number of other factors.

**The Chair:** Yeah. And hybrids are a solution. They are a legitimate solution. You haven't raised it, but we got some unwarranted criticism about hybrids earlier this week. It is tiresome, in my view, to hear people go on and on about how hybrids are, you know, the skunk at the garden party. It's not the case. So I'm pushing back

aggressively because you know who you represent, and I wish it was only Calgary and Edmonton we had to deal with.

9:30

**Member Kayande:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** I'm going to shut up and let the rest of the panel ask brief questions.

**Member Kayande:** Okay.

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you. I mean, I'm just going to pick up on that question of the north because that really is something we wrestle with a lot because, as Justice Miller said, there are any number of breathtaking comparators. The Mackenzie county, which is the northwest corner, has about 15,000 people in a space that's almost three times the size of the country of Belgium.

There are any number we could pick, you know, so there are unique challenges, but I guess I wonder: would you distinguish, as an MLA, between the unique challenges of dealing with that vast, vast geography, cellphone dead zones, massive driving distances, and ice roads and somewhere that's perhaps on the highway 2 corridor, for example, that has smaller towns, rural, but cell service? Really, what I'm asking is: if something has to give in terms of ensuring effective representation for folks in the far, remote north, what has to give, and how do we square that?

**Member Kayande:** Yeah. That's, I guess, my point – right? – that everything has a cost. And I agree, nothing is costless here. Hybrid ridings, for example. You know, the vast distances in northern Alberta, like, yes, those are – I would say that, for example, hybrid ridings are a last-ditch solution when you can't conceivably figure out a way to solve the problem. I hope that I haven't been one of these people who's been . . .

**The Chair:** No, you didn't. No. Sorry; I didn't mean to imply that, sir.

**Member Kayande:** Okay. Yeah. As well, when we look at the vast distances in the north, for example. I guess what I would say, and this is kind of a meta comment, is that population follows economic growth, right? If you'll permit me to be nakedly partisan for, like, the next two minutes . . .

**The Chair:** You'll be the first one.

**Mr. Evans:** Naked.

**Mr. Clark:** *Hansard* is forever, John.

**Member Kayande:** Yeah.

There's been a failure to invest in the economies of the north – right? – over multiple governments, over multiple years, and that failure to invest has resulted in a population that has not grown at the same rate as the rest of Alberta has. So the solution must be very carefully considered in line of the enormous costs in terms of representation. You know, do we say simply, "Okay; that's just the way that it is," and it's locked in, or do we allow northerners an opportunity to be like: "Look, we need a change here. We need a government that actually invests in us"?

This is a symptom. The fact that a seat was taken out of the north: it's not the problem. The problem is a lack of investment in the north. And I think if you talk to people in the north, they would agree.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much.

Dr. Martin, any questions or comments?

**Dr. Martin:** I know you're bursting to ask, but I'll ask a couple of questions, and thank you. I appreciate your remarks about the north. It's very likely part of the solution package, more investment there. Also, they've suffered in recent years with enormous fires. The town of Slave Lake twice, for example. That has pounded the local economy and the population and so on and so on.

**Member Kayande:** Yes. It's tragic.

**Dr. Martin:** We've had a large number of letters, this round in particular, about the north, and if I characterize them all together, they are all saying: we need more northern voices because we are underrepresented. Now, you've suggested, by just thinking about relative populations and the like, that they are overrepresented, and the weight of argument is not on your side there.

Similarly, one may argue, as we have amongst ourselves constantly, how to ensure that Edmonton and Calgary achieve effective representation. You may think it underrepresentation, but we're convinced it's effective. The case law, on the one hand, as you will well know, and the act itself give us guidance on what set of factors could constitute this nebulous creature called effective representation. That's our dilemma.

**Member Kayande:** I completely agree.

**Dr. Martin:** Not just the population, that on the surface of it looks unbalanced perhaps, but that's not, at the end of the day, how we come to the decision that, yeah, that's effective.

**Member Kayande:** That's right. The only thing that I would say, I guess, and one of the reasons I'm here is: let's not ignore the fact that while we are not a one person, one vote country, although, I mean, most people would find that very surprising if you asked them on the street.

**The Chair:** They do.

**Dr. Martin:** Well, most people would be surprised if they read the law at all.

**Member Kayande:** Yeah. While that may be something that exists, the Supreme Court has also been very clear, in my mind – sorry; I haven't read the briefings I received – that effective representation encompasses the notion that you want, you know, similar populations to have similar voices is a bedrock, right?

**Dr. Martin:** But you're making an elision there that you should back away from, which is the one most people make, between voter parity, which is the bulk of the directions we received from the Supreme Court's references. In order to achieve effective representation, you must place a large weighting on getting voter parity. It doesn't speak to populations, and there's an elision that's made in popular discussion between populations and voters, so we need to keep them all separate among all the other balls we're juggling.

**Member Kayande:** That sounds like a novel position to me.

**Dr. Martin:** No, but those are the facts of the matter.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm going to move over to Mrs. Samson. Any questions?

**Mrs. Samson:** Yes. Thank you for coming out. I appreciate your time today.

**Member Kayande:** Thank you very much, Susan.

**Mrs. Samson:** When we talk about more electoral districts, you know that we were only given two.

**Member Kayande:** Yes.

**Mrs. Samson:** Can you tell me how those decisions are made? In light of Alberta Is Calling and the knowledge that we were exploding at the seams, how could that have come down as only two?

**Member Kayande:** In terms of the deliberation in the House, you mean? Well, okay. I mean, I know that there is like a grade 9 civics approach to how legislation is written, which is that, you know, everybody in good faith argues about the various different proposals, and I know that Commissioner Clark is probably cracking a smile here at my description. What in actuality happens is that the government decides, "Here's the bill," and then it passes because they have the votes to pass it.

I have not reviewed the *Hansard* completely around, like, how much debate there was on merely adding two seats, so I don't have an answer for you, I'm afraid. I think that if the commission wants to, in their report, suggest that: look, we should probably be thinking about adding more seats in order to make sure that these very difficult, challenging decisions are made less so. You know, I don't presume to do your job for you, but that seems like something that I'd approach them on.

**Mrs. Samson:** I think you're absolutely right.

**The Chair:** We would probably make a recommendation on a comparative basis with other jurisdictions.

Mr. Evans, any questions or comments?

**Mr. Evans:** No. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Kayande, I appreciate you coming and I appreciate you being in very good nature taking the sparring that we've given you. We all had big breakfasts this morning and we're raring to go.

**Member Kayande:** These are long days, and you've been at this for a while. Again, I very much appreciate this, and I appreciate the work that you're doing.

**The Chair:** You know, if there was an unlimited budget for this process, I would insist that you present in Lesser Slave Lake and that the Fort McMurray presenters present in Calgary, because as presenters the public needs to see what other parts of the province are going through.

**Member Kayande:** That's right.

9:40

**The Chair:** And that's maybe a little bit why I came out pretty strongly on it.

**Member Kayande:** It's a fair comment. It really is, and you're absolutely correct that it's effective representation that's important.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you so much, and please remain to hear other presenters if you have the time.

**Member Kayande:** Okay. Absolutely. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Our next presenter isn't here, but, Richard Warnock, we're going to bring you up early if that's okay.

Please make yourself comfortable, identify yourself, tell us where you're from and what constituencies you wish to speak to.

**Mr. Warnock:** Okay. It's Richard Warnock, the mayor of Sundre, and I'm from Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre constituency at this time.

**Mrs. Samson:** Do you live in Sundre?

**Mr. Warnock:** I live in Sundre, yes.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Please proceed.

**Mr. Warnock:** Okay. Thank you. I'm sure you've heard most of this before, but I really want to emphasize on behalf of this beautiful community of Sundre, my fellow councillors, and the residents of Sundre that we are thankful for the opportunity to provide meaningful feedback from the viewpoint of a community that will be deeply impacted by the proposed changes to our current electoral boundaries from an operational and a cultural perspective.

You know, I'd like to take the time to start by telling you a bit about the community of Sundre and the goals and ambitions we have for the future of this incredible community. We are located in the foothills of the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, in fact just over the mountains from Banff national park. The town of Sundre has been identified as one of the 10 destination development zones in the province of Alberta by Travel Alberta.

For a number of years we've been working with Travel Alberta on destination development planning, and we are more geographically and strategically aligned with Banff, Bighorn, and Rocky Mountain House in this regard. We recently participated in a tourism strategic planning session in partnership with the Sundre Tourism Association, which included a survey of the residents of the town and our surrounding area. The vast majority of these residents were supportive of tourism in Sundre.

Our unique geography and close proximity to the eastern slopes is the ideal location for unique experiences, and we have worked hard to create strong partnerships with a number of international, market-ready tourism operators to the north, west, and south of Sundre in alignment with the government of Alberta's vision for tourism.

The town of Sundre has strong communities of interest and western municipalities that are distinct and different from the unique interests and priorities of our good neighbours to the east. We have a strong western community identity, and the proposed changes will split us from communities where we have historic and shared service ties, further disrupting our existing shared community identities. It is important that the commission recognizes the importance of how local governments and communities actually function and interact, and the regional cohesion we currently enjoy.

Operational co-operation is already established through mutual aid agreements with Bighorn, Clearwater county, and Sundre regional hub with our hospital, schools, social services, emergency, and fire areas to the west, including those of the MD of Bighorn and Clearwater county. This economic alignment is clearly western focused, and our key industries – oil and gas, forestry, sawmills, and tourism – contrast sharply with the eastern agricultural economy.

Sundre's economy is categorized as ultra-diversified due to our proximity to the foothills and primary resources. The town remains a hub for energy support services and conventional extraction, contributing to Alberta's energy sector, which accounts for roughly

25 per cent of our provincial GDP. Leveraging our western location near the West Fraser sawmill, forestry is a core industrial driver that is less prevalent in the plains area in the east. Sundre's mountain region makes tourism particularly a growth sector, with 2,000 campsites nearby. The local population in Sundre swells from 2,800 to 12,000 during the summer months with these local campgrounds around our town. These industries remain a pillar of regional employment.

The proposed boundary fails to recognize natural community interaction patterns, potentially going against the commission's requirement for boundaries that support robust and effective representation. We are aware that the new proposed electoral boundaries have faced criticism from both rural and urban communities. They create a conflict between the principles of population, equality, and effective representation.

When I read through the report, I was particularly interested in page 8 of the commission's interim report, which reads:

As a statutory body, this Commission's work begins with analyzing its enabling legislation. Only one of six criteria in Section 14 of the Act mentions population. After reviewing the Act, the Commission must remain focused on the constitutional right of Canadian citizens in Alberta . . .

And I'm sure you are.

. . . to vote and how that right has been interpreted by the Supreme Court . . . and the Alberta Court of Appeal. The Act reminds us of our duty in this regard. This translates to ensuring "effective representation."

The document's statement was further emphasized in the quote of the "pivotal case of Reference [of the] . . . Electoral Boundaries (Saskatchewan)" justice in the matter, which reached the Supreme Court in 1991.

McLachlin . . . in defining the right to vote, stated:

It is my conclusion that the purpose of the right to vote enshrined in [section] 3 of the Charter is not equality of voting power per se, but the right to "effective representation."

It goes on to state that

Ours is a representative democracy. Each citizen is entitled to be represented in government. Representation comprehends the idea of having a voice in the deliberations of government as well as the idea of the right . . . [of] one's grievances and concerns to our regional elected representative.

It is our concern that placing Sundre with communities that are distinctively different than Sundre puts us in a position where we are at risk of losing effective representation. The current proposal combines geographically and economically diverse areas. A representative for this large and varied constituency would face challenges addressing the specific shared regional interests facing our town, Sundre, and its immediate neighbours. We are concerned that our MLA may struggle to advocate effectively for our specific needs, as the communities east of highway 22 have vastly different priorities and demands, and our voice will be drastically diluted. Effective intermunicipal co-operation is comprised when key partners must ally with different elected representatives.

Additionally, the representation by population model fails the effective representation standard and community interests alongside raw numbers. Additionally, and of great importance, reducing rural ridings is not representative of Alberta as the overwhelming majority of Alberta is rural while cities and other urban centres occupy a very small geographical percentage.

We are deeply grateful for the work done to date and your representation for all of us Albertans. We respectfully request that the commission acknowledge the town of Sundre's viewpoint that there are additional considerations impacting municipalities that should be considered apart from population. Please revisit the boundaries proposed in the initial review. Consider placing Sundre

and western Mountain View county in a riding with Banff, MD of Bighorn, and Clearwater county.

Thank you for letting me present.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Warnock. We have the map in front of us here. Maybe I could get you to tell us where the eastern boundary, in your view, should be of this proposed riding.

**Mr. Warnock:** Having looked at the entire province and what you presented, I think making the geographical lines east-west instead of north-south does change the focus of what you have. Therefore, if you take east of highway 22, that's just on the east side of Sundre, and if you take west of there, it's a different culture, a different aspect.

**The Chair:** Okay. So 22 is the dividing line, in your view.

**Mr. Warnock:** Twenty-two.

**The Chair:** Okay. Let me go through the commission. They may have questions or dialogue.

Mr. Evans, anything?

**Mr. Evans:** Yeah. What was the percentage of revenue generated by the various – you talked about tourism. You talked about oil and gas. Are you projecting more growth in tourism? Is that your anticipation as opposed to . . .

**Mr. Warnock:** Yes. I believe west of highway 22 the Sundre, Caroline, Rocky, Drayton Valley areas are definitely changing their aspect with the decline of oil and gas being a different geographic percentage. We are all going to try and create that revenue by tourism because, as you know, forestry and oil and gas are declining.

**Mr. Evans:** We heard yesterday or the day before, I guess – maybe it was yesterday; I can't remember – about an investment of \$35 billion in tourism by the province. That's to 2035?

**Mr. Warnock:** Yeah. It's 10 years.

**Mr. Evans:** And it's \$35 billion.

**Mr. Warnock:** Yeah.

**Mr. Evans:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Susan, any questions?

**Mrs. Samson:** Just in a follow-up to this. The \$35 billion is targeted for your specific area, like, the foothills?

**Mr. Warnock:** Well, it's targeted for tourism. I don't think they drew a line that said that they're not going to allow some of that revenue to be elsewhere in Alberta.

**Mrs. Samson:** So they're talking about how that's their budget for the province.

9:50

**Mr. Warnock:** Of course, it's such a difference. If I could just take, you know, the Edmonton corridor of highway 16, I mean, what's in west Hinton, Edson, whatever: so different than Vegreville, Lloydminster. Well, Sundre, Rocky Mountain House is so different from Olds, Three Hills even. It's just such a different population.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you.

I am very interested in hearing more about Sundre as an economic hub. I'm thinking of more traditional industries: forestry, oil and gas, and some ranching. My general understanding from you, Mr. Mayor, and other submissions we've had is that there is a fairly clear divide in the type of agricultural uses, one may say, between the area east of 22 and the area west of 22. Is that how over the decades these areas have distinguished themselves from each other?

**Mr. Warnock:** Very much. The forage side of agriculture, which is, you know, the grass areas, the cattle areas, and so on, is basically highway 22 and west. Of course, east of that is more a crop culture, grain and so on and so forth, canola, grain. They definitely have a different aspect of how they market that. It's really distinct. I don't know how to explain it other than what I've learned through that is such a difference of opinion and focus on how they market their product. It does feed down to the municipalities, right?

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Clark.

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you.

First off, I'm somewhat envious of anyone who lives in that part of the province because it really is a unique kind of, you know, place: mountains, prairie. You're a lucky guy, so I'm envious.

I'm looking at the current Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre constituency. I see that Rimbey is a really different place than Sundre in the same way. As you say, it's agricultural. It's a different kind of agriculture and even just the transportation time. It takes about an hour and 25, according to my friend Google Maps, to drive to Rimbey whereas our proposal would have you out to Three Hills, which is east, and that would be about an hour and 15, right? You've got kind of a different orientation, but the kind of impact in terms of, like, an MLA's ability to serve that area, diverse as it may be, is not really impacted, or it is impacted maybe differently.

I guess I'm just kind of curious if you can kind of tell me a bit about, you know, what the conditions are like, road conditions, cell coverage. Have you got pretty decent cell coverage when you're on the road?

**Mr. Warnock:** It is east of 22, for sure. West of 22 not so much, right? Clearwater county is certainly working on having that fibre put into that area. But once you go west of Sundre, the municipal district of Bighorn and anywhere west of Sundre, there is literally no Internet service. In a lot of places there's no cell service. Period. Our emergency services do service that area, so it is very complex from an emergency services system.

Our fire department in Sundre is so vastly different than the fire department in Olds, Didsbury, or Carstairs. It's just crazy, the different exposure that we have and the risks our firefighters have because of that service you're just talking about. They have to get their help before they go there because once they get there, they've got to send somebody in a vehicle to the nearest place a cellphone works to call for additional resources.

**Mr. Clark:** Okay. Thank you so much. Thanks. I really appreciate you coming down today as well.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Warnock. Now, we have lots of problems and challenges with this commission. We're looking for solutions. Have you come up with a map that corrects what we've done in relation to Sundre and the surrounding area?

**Mr. Warnock:** I didn't prepare one to bring with me, but what I can say is that if you use highway 22 as your dividing line and you take west of that and east of that all the way to Banff, Jasper, that's a different scope totally, and it really makes a world of difference.

**The Chair:** So you want Banff in your riding.

**Mr. Warnock:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much.  
Okay. That prompted one question. Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** From time to time I go camping, and I always go through Sundre, where there are some great sandwich shops, good gas stations, and from there I go up the upper Red Deer River to Ya Ha Tinda. Mountain View is the last sort of point of civilization on that road, and from there you can get down to Banff, can't you?

**Mr. Warnock:** Absolutely.

**Dr. Martin:** Is this an all-year-round road for a guy in a pickup truck?

**Mr. Warnock:** Yes. It's not the best road – let me put it that way – but it is absolutely serviceable year-round. South of there – if you go south of Kananaskis, for example – that same road is closed in the wintertime because of the pass, but between Banff highway 40 is open year-round.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you so much. Please feel free to stay and hear the rest of the presentations.

**Mr. Warnock:** Thank you for letting me be here today. I appreciate it.

**The Chair:** Okay. Our next presenter is Sarah Elmeligi.  
Good morning. Make yourself comfortable, identify yourself, and tell us what riding you are from or, well, representing.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Good morning. Yeah. My name is Sarah Elmeligi. I am the MLA for Banff-Kananaskis. It's very fortuitous to come after the mayor of Sundre. I want to thank him for his comments and perspective, especially since Banff came up multiple times. Hopefully, I can help contribute to that conversation.

I currently represent the best riding in Alberta, or the most beautiful, for sure. The proposed Banff-Jasper riding is even more beautiful, so that's kind of fun. Through my time as MLA I've developed in-depth relationships with the communities and people that I represent across the riding. I've learned so much about them, but I've also learned quite a bit about other communities along the eastern slopes as the shadow minister of Environment and Protected Areas, so I'm here today to provide input from both of those perspectives.

Electoral boundaries are a foundation of our democracy. How we decide to link communities together impacts how they are represented in the Legislature, and this is critical work, so I want to thank you all on the commission for your continued hard work to refine Alberta's electoral boundaries. I do not envy your job. I think it might be one of the hardest ones in the province right now, to be fair. The work that you're doing is at the heart of our democracy,

and it's really essential in how Albertans trust the electoral process, so thank you so much for stepping forward to do this.

While my comments today will pertain to the changes of the Banff-Kananaskis riding and the proposed new riding of Banff-Jasper, there are some overarching comments I wish to share based on the Electoral Boundaries Commission interim report.

First, I support separating urban and rural ridings while also retaining sufficient rural representation. There are significant differences between the needs of rural and urban Albertans, and as a rural MLA whose constituency borders Alberta's largest city I witness how my constituents' needs shift with their proximity to that city. For example, not having a local doctor in your community is very different for the people of Springbank, who live right next to the city of Calgary, versus the people in the MD of Bighorn, who might need to drive farther. The pressures experienced to convert agricultural land to other development intensifies as communities get closer to Calgary such as comparing grazing leases in the Ghost to private cattle ranches in Springbank or farms in Priddis. Rural transportation for school buses is also completely different in the MD of Foothills than it is in the city of Calgary, and there are completely different associated costs. Wildfire risk, preparedness, and response, which is something that every community in Banff-Kananaskis is concerned about, is an issue whose intensity and necessity is completely different in a rural landscape than it is in the city.

It is beneficial and strategic for an MLA to be able to represent the needs of their constituents when there are common needs, and this aligns with the need to keep similar communities together in riding boundaries. It really makes my job so much easier when my communities have something in common. This is a critical component of creating a fair map that ensures effective representation and that an MLA has the ability to represent their constituents with fairness and equality.

**10:00**

It is much easier to represent your constituents to your caucus and to the Legislature when there are common concerns. It is much harder to adequately and fairly represent your constituents when they are diametrically opposite to each other. As an MLA for a riding with a very diverse population I have come to this perspective from experience, and while I embrace the diversity of my riding, it does make my job more challenging at times.

A riding that is split between urban and rural communities will inevitably reduce the rural voice as the riding's greater population density will undoubtedly be in the urban area. The previous Banff-Cochrane riding was really problematic, as a person who's lived in Canmore for the last 18 years, because we felt in Canmore that we did not have a voice in provincial politics because the community of Cochrane pulled the vote, basically. When Banff and Canmore were included in a riding with Cochrane, the needs of the smaller communities were often deemed less important or less urgent than the needs of Cochrane, and that's simply because the majority of the population of the riding lived in Cochrane. So it's no fault of previous MLAs or previous processes. The sentiment in the mountain communities, however, was one of being overlooked or that their concerns didn't matter as much.

One of the greatest things about the current riding of Banff-Kananaskis is that there is no one population that sways issues in a biased way. As MLA, there is no one single community in my riding whose issues become more important than any others. It becomes my job to find the common ground between communities and to highlight the differences between them with fairness for each. It is a balancing act, but it helps ensure that every community feels equally represented. I will say that, as MLA for a riding like

Banff-Kananaskis that goes from Springbank to Lake Louise, it is my personal goal to make sure that each of my communities feel fairly represented.

The commission is faced with a significant challenge. As the population grows, many people move from rural to urban areas, and this has drastically increased the populations in both Edmonton and Calgary. It is apparent that both cities require an extra seat to ensure that population is fairly and equally distributed among MLAs. But I'll also say that rural Alberta is arguably different, and every rural riding is different from the others. Rural Alberta is a diverse, complex, and beautiful place with communities of various sizes, interests, economic potential, and population growth levels. A fair electoral boundaries map will also make sure that these characteristics of Alberta are maintained, acknowledged, and addressed. Finding ways to do this is perhaps the greatest challenge for the commission. When it comes to designing the rural riding boundaries, I believe it is important to link similar communities together, which the boundary commission has done well with the new proposed Banff-Jasper riding.

I support the proposed changes to the Banff-Kananaskis riding to create a Banff-Jasper riding for a couple really key reasons. First, I want to address the way that the riding brings Indigenous communities together. First, grouping all Stoney Nation communities, Eden Valley, Mini Thni, and Big Horn into one riding is great.

Over the past few months I've shared this change with Stoney residents and leadership and have received positive comments of support. There is broad recognition that bringing all of these communities and nations together under the responsibility of one MLA will improve representation of Stoney issues at the provincial government level. It continues to be my great honour to represent the Stoney people in a good way. Including the Sunchild and O'Chiese First Nations as well as retaining Tsuut'ina Nation in the riding ensures that the MLA for this riding will have a significant First Nations population to represent from both Treaty 6 and 7.

While all First Nations in Alberta are different, often speaking different languages, exhibiting different cultural and ceremonial protocols, and having different economic opportunities based on a variety of factors, there are commonalities. A good MLA for this area will work closely with these nations to understand their differences and find the best common ground to represent them. From my working experience with Treaty 7 one thing most First Nations have in common is a feeling of inadequate meaningful consultation on government decision-making processes, legislation, and policies and land-use planning. Having one MLA represent so many different First Nations gives each nation a more comprehensive voice when it comes to representing the need for their participation in government policy and the need for that policy to more thoroughly represent their input. An MLA who represents this diversity of nations will inherently need to cultivate productive relationships with MP counterparts and weave federal policies with provincial policies to ensure reconciliation is both meaningful and effective.

With these changes this riding becomes one of high Indigenous representation. That's a significant responsibility, requiring a unique set of skills. It's also a massive opportunity to demonstrate what truth and reconciliation can be when we work together with multiple First Nations and multiple levels of government. This boundary change could position Alberta as a leader in electoral reform to enhance Indigenous representation in a way that serves First Nations and celebrates all that they bring to our provincial culture, economy, and ways of knowing. I know part of the challenge to this riding – do you have a question, or am I running out of time?

**The Chair:** No, it's a time signal. Keep going but kind of wrap it up here so we can have some questions and dialogue.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Wow. Okay. I have a lot more. I'll zip through this part really fast then.

**The Chair:** Yeah, please zip.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Okay. I know this idea of including Jasper is concerning for a lot of people. I just want to take some time to talk about the national parks of Banff and Jasper, unique landscapes, their lands managed by the federal government, with federal pieces of legislation representing people who are Albertans. They also have the towns of Banff and Jasper, which are incorporated municipalities. In that way Banff and Jasper are actually unique municipalities in Canada. There are no other municipalities in national parks that are incorporated and have elected municipal government. So the MLA for this area necessarily inherently has to navigate municipal, provincial, and federal politics to best serve the people of these communities. That inherently makes Banff and Jasper have something in common.

The other thing that they have in common is that high dependency on tourism economy, really, as a foundation economy to the municipalities but also significant provincial contributors. Canmore, Banff, and Jasper contribute over \$1.5 billion a year to the provincial economy. How we manage tourism in these three communities specifically is very critical, and the intricacy of how that's done is nice if that falls to one MLA.

The other thing I'll bring in is that we are all mountain communities. After the Jasper fires displaced residents sought refuge in Banff and Canmore. Banff and Canmore have started to change their wildfire response protocols based on lessons learned in Jasper. We have regular communication as Canmore, Banff, and Jasper. We work together on a lot of things, whether we're in the same provincial riding or not.

This new proposed riding of Banff-Jasper also protects a big portion of the headwaters for the Bow and the North Saskatchewan watersheds, and that is something that people living along the eastern slopes have in common, a concern about protecting the headwaters.

The last thing I'll say about the specific riding boundaries is that I really think the community of Priddis belongs in the Okotoks-Diamond Valley or High River-Vulcan riding. I love Priddis. It's amazing. I'm actually heading there right after this. But Priddis agricultural landscape really has a lot more in common with Millarville and Diamond Valley rural areas than even with Bragg Creek, which is geographically closer. So I'm recommending that the riding boundary go south on secondary highway 762 to connect with highway 549 and go west from there.

I'll open it up for questions.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** And I'll e-mail you this because there's a lot more in here.

**The Chair:** Oh, please do. I somewhat regret slowing you down here and stopping you.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** No, that's okay.

**The Chair:** There's going to be lots of discussion here.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Sure.

**The Chair:** We'll touch on some of the issues that I'm sure you'll want us to understand.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** Mr. Clark, any questions?

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you. I appreciate you coming. It's always great to hear from elected officials, municipal and provincial. You have a good sense of kind of the reality on the ground, and that's really helpful for us. So thank you for coming.

I'm curious. There have been some discussion questions around what the connections are perhaps south of you down into Crowsnest Pass.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Yeah. Sure.

**Mr. Clark:** That's a bit of a new one for me. I'd never heard that before. I guess I'm curious on your view as to what that connection is or isn't between your area and places like Pincher Creek, et cetera.

*10:10*

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Yeah. I mean, there are a lot of commonalities, obviously. Like the ecosystem is very similar, with the mountains to the foothills to the grasslands, and so the communities are kind of similar.

I spent some time in the Crowsnest Pass last year trying to talk to the current council about tourism opportunities, and the council told me in that conversation that they had no interest of becoming like Canmore, that they see themselves very different from Canmore. They are interested in exploring tourism, but they made it sound like they're not interested in exploring it to the extent that it is present in the Bow Valley, and there's a lot of nuance and complications there. Like, the Crowsnest Pass will never be the Bow Valley. It's not an hour away from a city of over a million people. There are a lot of things that make it very different and unique.

I don't think the people of the Crowsnest Pass think that they have a lot in common with Canmore, so, in one way, I don't know that it matters what I think about that. I don't think that the people of Canmore see themselves as being in common with Crowsnest Pass and vice versa. I think people really perceive that as being two very different, unique parts of the province, so I don't recommend putting the Bow Valley and Crowsnest Pass into one riding. I don't think it makes sense.

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you very much for your presentation. Even though it was slightly truncated, we certainly got the spirit of it all.

I'm interested in your remarks about your role with respect to the diversity of communities you inevitably have in any riding, perhaps in this one most visibly so. You see your role as, if I'm paraphrasing, balancing those diverse interests from time to time, and I commend you for tackling that. It seems that you are pretty good at it.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** I try my best.

**Dr. Martin:** My point really is that this new configuration loads a heck of a lot more balancing work on your plate. I have some experience with the federal national park system and, you know, the superintendents are lords and quite apart from the incorporated towns. The superintendent is a really big voice. The sets of interests

that an MLA carries are burdensome already. This configuration would double them.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Well, we might be able to agree to disagree on that point.

**Dr. Martin:** Oh, okay.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** I've been working in national parks also since way before I was an MLA. You're correct that the relationship between the federal government as the national park agency and the superintendent and the municipal government is a complex one, but the roles and responsibilities are actually quite clearly defined. I do think that the municipal government in both Banff and Jasper have over the years developed really productive relationships with their respective superintendents. I think most of the conflict, if I may be so bold, actually stems from direction coming from Ottawa, not necessarily from the superintendents. I feel like that is another piece of complexity, I will say.

I do think it takes sensitivity to navigate that as a provincial MLA, but I think it actually makes the MLA's job easier to consider Banff and Jasper in the same work portfolio because they have a lot in common in that space. The municipal governments of Banff and Jasper, like the mayors, are already working together all the time, as are the superintendents of Banff and Jasper already working together all the time in what's known as the Rocky Mountain park complex. Those relationships already exist, and it's not that I mind having two MLAs working on it right now. I mean, I work well with MLA Long, who currently represents Jasper, but I think it's a lot easier if it's just one MLA who is developing those relationships and working with those parties.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mrs. Samson.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you.

Thank you for coming out again.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Thanks for having me. Yeah. My pleasure.

**Mrs. Samson:** We've heard back from Canmore, not necessarily the mayor. He's quite supportive, just wants the name in the title Canmore-Banff-Jasper.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Yeah. He told me about that.

**Mrs. Samson:** We'll have to talk. But the thing that gets me is that there has been – I would like to hear your opinion from talking with your residents inside Canmore. How do they feel about joining the parks, the national parks, when they are not a national park?

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Well, we're not joining the national park. We're still outside of the national park.

**Mrs. Samson:** Yeah. Maybe that's the wrong word.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Like I tried to say, and it does say it more in my written submission, we really see ourselves as mountain people. I think that sentiment was further reinforced with the Jasper fire because every single person who lives in Exshaw, Dead Man's, Canmore, and Banff went outside the next day and looked at those surrounding hillsides and was like: that could be us.

Our communities totally ignored the fact that there are national parks and provincial parks and different municipalities. We instantly opened up. There were all kinds of, like, fundraisers and gear fundraisers because the poor people of Jasper don't have

climbing ropes anymore. How will they go climbing? I can't even tell you the amount of community effort that went into helping the people of Jasper in that immediate recovery time. People were opening their homes, their garages, their backyards for people to camp in. We welcomed a lot of displaced residents from Jasper, but also just the community really came together, recognizing that we are mountain people. I think the people of Canmore appreciate the idea of being recognized as such with Banff and Jasper.

**Mrs. Samson:** Good. Thank you. I appreciate that.

**The Chair:** Mr. Evans, any questions?

**Mr. Evans:** No, but thank you for your submissions.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry to be such a timekeeper, but I have a comment to make and maybe some feedback. I wish you'd have been here a day or two ago. We had a presenter highly critical of our proposed electoral division. I can tell you, I was a big fan of it at the early stages when we had the deliberations. I'm starting to be concerned about a balkanization of that riding. We could do better in terms of representation, according to the presenter a day or two ago, if we had two MLAs from the foothills into the Rockies advocating on behalf of that tourism zone bordering the alpine district. There's considerable push-back, and I wish we had had you presenting right after that person because it's an interesting debate.

Let me ask you this: if we extended it as far as Sundre, as proposed by the previous presenter, could you live with that?

**Dr. Elmeligi:** I mean, you know, the funny thing is that it's not actually about me. I will not be MLA for this riding forever. Somebody will come after me, and you're making a decision that pertains to the next 10 years. I was thinking this morning how one of the hardest things is that people will come to you thinking about who the MLA might be and what party that MLA might represent and how people will vote, but ultimately your decision is to create boundaries so that people feel like they're grouped with like people. It doesn't matter how they vote or how many of them vote or don't vote. As MLA it's my job to represent all the people in my riding, regardless of if they voted for me or if they're even eligible to vote.

When I think about the eastern slopes and the Rocky Mountains, I see what you have proposed as being grouping like communities together, communities that are facing similar challenges around tourism growth and pressures and also the challenges that come with just living in rural Alberta and being far away from the city. So I wish I could have been here, too.

**The Chair:** Yeah. I wish I had another half hour with you here, too.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Well, you know, I mean, I would happily present again and just come and answer questions. Aaron, of course, knows how to get in touch with me if you do have written questions you'd like me to answer more specifically. I'm happy to do that at a later date.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your presentation and for the dialogue. Much appreciated.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Thank you.

**Mrs. Samson:** Send your presentation over.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** I will.

**Mrs. Samson:** I would like to read it.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** I might add a little bit more to it based on your questions.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Thank you so much.

**The Chair:** Good. Okay. Two more before the break.

Mr. Sabir. Irfan Sabir. Good morning. Make yourself comfortable, and tell us what electoral division you're from and which ones you wish to comment on.

**10:20**

**Mr. Sabir:** Good morning, commissioners. I'm Irfan Sabir, MLA for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall. I will be making comments generally about my riding and the city. First, I would like to convey my appreciation for the opportunity to provide feedback on the interim report and for your many weeks of hard work on this redistribution process.

I'll jump right into the Calgary context. While the interim report makes steps toward recognizing Calgary's current and future growth, it still falls short of providing effective representation for Calgarians and Albertans in general. The proposed map fails to accommodate current and projected future population growth and, if implemented as is, would result in Calgary being underrepresented in future Legislatures.

The addition of Calgary-Confluence east of downtown and the new Calgary-North Creek riding in the north are two of the strengths of the new map. These proposals will help to prevent north and central Calgary seats from becoming overpopulated and will provide representation where population growth is increasing. However, both options fall short by failing to recognize and plan for Calgary's growth.

Most of the proposed ridings in Calgary are over the provincial average, and my proposed riding of Calgary-Bhullar-McCall is over by 10 per cent. At the same time the map proposes new hybrid districts in Calgary-West-Elbow Valley and Calgary-Cross, which take neighbouring rural areas to reach the average population number despite Calgary itself being overpopulated. Simply put, these hybrid ridings are not necessary to achieve the legislative purpose of effective representation.

Although the commission is not bound by a strict requirement to adhere to a measure of one person, one vote per the 1991 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in the reference re provincial boundaries Saskatchewan, in the same decision the court also notes that diluting one group of citizen votes compared to another increases the likelihood that a map will not provide effective representation. In this manner the proposed map fails to strike a proportionate balance by making Calgary's seats on average significantly more overpopulated than rural Alberta and by diluting Calgary votes by arbitrarily connecting them to rural areas that are outside of their communities of interest.

This map could readily be improved by adding an additional seat to Calgary to recognize our fast rate of growth and better balance out overpopulated and high-growth areas of the city. Given that Calgary has a high enough population to have each seat be fully urban and within the population variance allowed for under section 15(1) of the act, there is no compelling reason to include rural areas like Cochrane, Springbank, Okotoks, and Bears paw with Calgary ridings.

Section 14(b) and (e) of the act allow the commission to take into consideration communities of interest and clarity of boundaries. Both of these elements would be most readily served by pairing rural or small urban communities with rural or small urban communities that share their interests while keeping metropolitan

areas like Calgary fully self-contained with clear, comprehensible boundaries.

The residents of my riding chose to live in Calgary, and they deserve to have a representative who understand their needs, the challenges they face in the communities that they live in and share interests with. The communities I represent are also a lot more diverse than neighbouring municipalities. If you merge us together, you will dilute the voices of racialized Albertans who have worked so hard to be fairly recognized.

I would also highlight for the commission that while it may consider factors that are enumerated in the act, the legislative intent of section 14 is clear that the requirements are, firstly, the Charter and, secondly, the enumerated factors in section 14(a) to (e). They take precedence of any additional potential factors which are not included in the legislation. If the Legislature intended the commission to rely on additional factors – voter turnout, eligibility, industrial output, GDP – those factors would have been included specifically in the text of the act. While the act provides commissioners some flexibility to consider factors external to the act to a limited extent, it places a heavy priority on the legal requirements of the Charter and those factors specifically included like rate of growth and communities of interest.

To the extent that this is a factor at all, voter turnout or eligibility should be weighed very minimally. In a province like Alberta, with rapid growth, turnout is likely to shift and change between elections, and it is not a reliable indicator of whether a riding provides effective representation. As MLAs we are obligated to serve our constituents, regardless of whether or not they choose or are eligible to participate in elections. This is why real population is a determinative factor, not voter eligibility. Relying on the latter would make many ridings unreasonably large. I represent a riding with many new immigrants. Some of them arrived last year, and some of them have been in the process of their citizenship for years. They have just as much of a right to representation as someone who is a citizen. This is the bedrock of our democracy.

Section 15 makes clear that the Legislature intended those factors to be used to assess and determine constituency size, not eligible voters or turnout. If this were a factor for the commission to consider, that would have been included. As I indicated, my riding is over by 10 per cent of the provincial average.

**The Chair:** Mr. Sabir, I hate to play Mr. Speaker here, but I see the number of pages you have, and I've got the warning. I'm going to ask you to wrap it up because we do want to have some conversation with you. Can you wind it up in two minutes?

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you for your consideration.

**The Chair:** Okay. Sorry. You shouldn't have had those pages up to see.

**Mr. Sabir:** No, some of them are background documents that I . . .

**The Chair:** I'm going to start with Mr. Evans. Questions or comments of Mr. Sabir?

**Mr. Evans:** No. Thank you, Mr. Sabir.

**The Chair:** Mrs. Samson?

**Mrs. Samson:** No, thank you. I assume that you liked your own riding that you're currently in, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall.

**Mr. Sabir:** I think I may not specifically comment whether I like it or not, but I do see that my riding and many other Calgary ridings are above the provincial average. That's why I'm suggesting that

adding another riding in Calgary will address that issue and make room for effective representation.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Dr. Martin?

**Dr. Martin:** No. Nothing.

**Mr. Clark:** I do have questions.

**The Chair:** Good.

**Mr. Clark:** I feel like if we cut off Mr. Sabir, we should probably ask some questions.

**The Chair:** Yeah. I've got some.

**Mr. Clark:** Yeah. I do, for sure. I guess I'll start with your constituency, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall. Looking at that area there, one of the questions I guess I have is that sort of the rationale or the thinking about it – it's relatively well established. Are there areas for growth in there? What are you anticipating in terms of population growth, new development? It feels like it's reasonably built out based on a 50,000-foot view of a map, but I'm quite curious on your perspective as the person who lives in the neighbourhood and works in the community.

**Mr. Sabir:** I think I will make two comments. One, they took out Martindale, added the Cityscape area, so that doesn't change much in terms of the population mix. Like, it's a similar population in both these neighbourhoods, so that's not a concern for me, but Cityscape has a lot more potential for growth.

**Mr. Clark:** Sorry. Where is that? Is that east of the Stoney Trail? Where is Cityscape?

**Mr. Sabir:** Cityscape will be – I'll have to look at it. It will be north of 96 and west of Stoney Trail.

**Mr. Clark:** Oh, I see. It's just right out to the airport, so it would be . . .

**The Chair:** It's just not in your riding yet?

**Mr. Sabir:** No, Cityscape the new map has included.

**Mr. Clark:** It's just south of Country Hills, so where the words "Calgary-Bhullar-McCall" are, it's just above that.

**Mr. Sabir:** Yeah. My entire riding is west of Stoney.

**Mr. Clark:** Yeah, just essentially right next to the airport, east of Métis Trail. Got it. Okay.

**Mr. Sabir:** But there are two neighbourhoods – like, in Saddle Ridge there is a neighbourhood, Savanna, that has growth potential, and Cityscape does have growth potential.

**Mr. Clark:** But relative to other parts of northeast Calgary that you're familiar with, the growth is likely to be relatively slower? The reason I'm asking this is that Calgary-Bhullar-McCall is a bit overpopulated relative to other constituencies because it's, frankly, impossible to draw a map that is exactly perfect and also maintains community integrity. I guess that would just be a question: have we missed anything really big? Is there, you know, some enormous development that we were unaware of? I'm just curious on that.

10:30

**Mr. Sabir:** I think in the northeast, when you look at it, the potential for development is north of 96th. That would be Cityscape, Redstone, all those communities. Skyview.

**Mr. Clark:** Okay. That's helpful. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Mr. Sabir, I want to engage with you on the main points of your presentation, as I understood, before I cut you off.

I think it's safe to say that we are not able to put another riding in Calgary. Maybe my commissioners will disagree with me, but we're not going to be able to. We've done what we can so far.

You made some comments about the hybrids, and we heard a lot of comments this week criticizing hybrids. But to me we're a construction crew. We're tasked with building something. If we're told we can't use tools to build something, it's really frustrating. Hybrids are a legitimate tool under the legislation, under the jurisprudence, and we've got several of them across the province. No question. Calgary has got a couple or three, and Edmonton's got some. We have to use them. This is a very challenging task.

When you made reference to an unreasonably large riding, I assume you meant population, correct?

**Mr. Sabir:** I was looking at my riding map and the variance that it's showing me. Then I was looking at many other Calgary ridings . . .

**The Chair:** It's still in the target range though. I've had this discussion with our fellow commissioners. The average isn't the goal; the target range is the goal for us.

**Mr. Sabir:** I understand that part. At the same time, as you said, you have that hybrid as a tool, but you also have a tool in your tool box that you can add another riding in Calgary. That would address, I guess, many other factors that are needed.

**The Chair:** Okay. Let me talk about an unreasonably large riding. We had a presentation from someone in the north earlier this week who said the southern border of one of our proposed northern ridings is closer to Montana than it is to Northwest Territories. That's an unreasonably large riding that we have to deal with in this round. I said previously – I'm not sure you were here – that I wish I had all the money available to force you to present in Fort McMurray or Lesser Slave Lake and have the northern people present in downtown Calgary, so there's that cross-pollination.

You prepared this well. You know the statistics, but I guess I just don't want to dash your hopes. I want to be realistic. I think we have to be realistic first here, so respond to that.

**Mr. Sabir:** Well, that's my recommendation based on my reading of the map, my reading of legislation and jurisprudence, that adding another riding in Calgary would help address these averages, would make for effective representation of Calgary in future Legislatures, and, also, would eliminate the need to add neighbourhoods outside of Calgary into Calgary ridings that may not have as much in common with Calgary as they will have, for instance, with Chestermere- Strathmore and neighbouring communities.

**The Chair:** I wish we could do that. Thank you so much.

Any other questions or comments from the panel before I let Mr. Sabir go?

Okay. Thank you for coming. Again, please stay to hear the other presentations, and we look forward to ongoing dialogue.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I believe there's one more presenter before we break. Is Amelia Kiddle present?

**Dr. Kiddle:** Good morning.

**The Chair:** Good morning.

**Dr. Kiddle:** Thanks very much for having me, and thank you so much for your service to the commission. My name is Amelia Kiddle. I'm a professor at the University of Calgary and associate dean, research in the Faculty of Arts, but I'm here as a private citizen and a resident of Calgary-Varsity. I will be quite brief as I'm not an MLA, and I don't have any of the interests that some of my predecessors here have had, but what I did want to do was just take a minute to talk about the riding of Calgary-Varsity.

I've lived in the riding since 2012, when I moved to Calgary to work at the University of Calgary, and I have witnessed the incredible growth in the riding of Calgary-Varsity, particularly with the new construction in what's called University District around the University of Calgary. This has been a very large development of the west campus trust lands to the west of the university but bordering Shaganappi Trail. You can see on the map there where Shaganappi is. All of this, I would say, is like up on the hill by the university, not down in the river valley. The growth in the riding has been great, and there's also a potential of additional growth. I myself live in Brentwood, and there's been a development that's been proposed for the corner of Brentwood Boulevard and Brisebois, which is where there's a small co-op. That will also be an additional large development; multiple towers, multistorey residences.

This takes me to the point, which is that the current proposal that I've seen for the riding includes the community of Montgomery. This is not in the current boundaries of Calgary-Varsity; rather, it's in the current boundaries of Calgary-Bow. It's my submission that Montgomery should stay in Calgary-Bow, and this is, again, because of communities of interest. Montgomery, because of traffic patterns, because it's down in the river valley, has much more in common with Bowness than with Varsity or Brentwood, which are up on the hill and by Nose Hill. Then, this is also seen, for example, in the current municipal emergency regarding the water main breakage where Montgomery, like Bowness, has been greatly affected by the water main break and has experienced boil-water advisories whereas up on the hill it's a completely different area.

Given the prospective population growth in University District and in Brentwood as well as the communities of interest with Montgomery and Bowness, that is my submission, that although, you know, we're glad that you're working on this, it was a mistake to include Montgomery in the proposed boundaries for Varsity.

**The Chair:** Thank you. We've heard other submissions on this point.

Mr. Evans, any questions or comments?

**Mr. Evans:** No. Thank you

**The Chair:** Mrs. Samson.

**Mrs. Samson:** No. No questions. That was clearly articulated by many others before you.

10:40

**The Chair:** Yeah.

Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** Yes. Thank you very much. I want to actually talk to you as a university-affiliated person. Two questions, really. One is the sort of triangle, as it were, if you look on the map, that runs from Crowchild to Shaganappi and with the southern boundary of 32nd. Now, it used to be loosely understood as the research area for the university.

**Dr. Kiddle:** Oh. Do you mean . . .

**Dr. Martin:** That big triangle, as it were.

**Dr. Kiddle:** So between Shaganappi and Crowchild.

**Dr. Martin:** And with 32nd.

**Dr. Kiddle:** Oh, yes. Yeah, there's going to be additional development in there as well.

**Dr. Martin:** So I wanted to ask you about that. It's not just research development.

**Dr. Kiddle:** No. There'll be housing, too, is my understanding.

**Dr. Martin:** Is that going to be student housing, or is that public housing – excuse me; private housing?

**Dr. Kiddle:** Not public but private, yeah. It's my understanding that they'll be developing part of that area very much in the same way that they have developed the west campus trust into University District. Some of that property, it's my understanding, will also be developed in a similar way, although there will continue to be research facilities. There's a current construction project right beside the Smart building, which will be a research facility. But it's my understanding that they will also be developing some of it for housing.

You may note that at the corner of 32nd where the fire station is, there's a new public housing development there that includes accessible housing, so some of the new growth will go in behind that fire station. Yeah.

**Dr. Martin:** Ah. And that leads directly to my second question, if I might, and that's about student population growth.

**Dr. Kiddle:** Yes.

**Dr. Martin:** I mean, the University of Calgary, like many universities, have experienced very large growth in recent years and have struggled to accommodate it, to be sure. But the growth, I put to you, is going to slump. So what are your projections for student population growth? Where are they going to live? Do they come from all over the city now?

**Dr. Kiddle:** As a professor in history most of my students live at home, many live in Calgary and do not live in residence. So it's quite different from a four-year residential college, such as that I attended. Instead, most are coming from the northeast, the southwest, et cetera, taking public transportation, trying to get to the university. So although there are residence facilities on campus, they're not as extensive as they might be at some other institutions. Also, the university family housing is being razed at the moment for these condos in University District, so there's going to be much more density in the University District as a result of that change. Yeah.

**Dr. Martin:** But that will not be, then, an exclusively university-related person, just sort of the general private area.

**Dr. Kiddle:** No. It seems that many students are renting in those areas in the University District – some are – but the rents are quite high. I don't know whether, you know, a great proportion of them are.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thanks, Dr. Kiddle.  
Mr. Clark.

**Mr. Clark:** No questions. We've had a substantial amount of input on this one.

**Dr. Kiddle:** Okay.

**Mr. Clark:** I just want to say thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you. You're excused.

**Dr. Kiddle:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** We have a full slate of about six or seven more presenters. We're going to have a brief break. My watch says it's 12 minutes to, so can we reconvene at 5 to 11, please?

[The hearing adjourned from 10:45 a.m. to 10:57 a.m.]

**The Chair:** Okay. Good morning again, everyone. We'll reconvene our second part of the morning.

Our first presenter is all queued up. Mr. Jim Ridley, tell us what riding you're from and which boundaries you wish to comment on.

**Mr. Ridley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate it. My name is Jim Ridley. I live in the town of Canmore, and presently our riding is Banff-Kananaskis. First and foremost, I want to thank the commission for the hard work that they've put in and will continue to do until the final report is prepared. I brought a token of appreciation for your work here from the town of Canmore, a little pin here that I'll distribute.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Ridley:** You're welcome.

**Dr. Martin:** On our travels, sir, we visited a lot of towns that had big objects. Does Canmore have a big object?

**Mr. Ridley:** It has a big head. It is a statue that our art committee put on main street, and it's very popular. It's a Gaelic reference to a big chief or big head. There was an army veteran that was commissioned to make a baldheaded statue about two and a half metres high. The kids love climbing all over that head. So yes, we do have a big structure there.

**Dr. Martin:** That's Alberta tradition.

**Mr. Ridley:** Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to provide some further comments for your consideration. I was born and brought up in Calgary, and I've lived in Canmore for 25 years. I'm a retired town councillor, served three terms for the town of Canmore. I would just like to preface my comments today with a reference to my presentation that I made in the spring to you folks. This is just in regard to demographics, which certainly have not changed appreciably since the spring. I just want to remind the commission that the largest municipality in the current riding is the town of Canmore. In March '25 a population count was reported for 2024 of 17,200 in Canmore, so it is the largest municipality in the riding.

Further to that, a detailed report in the *Calgary Herald* – and I had referenced that in my last presentation – explained the approved area structure plans on the Three Sisters development lands, which was headlined *New Developments Will Double Canmore's Population in 20 Years*. That is under way. That would result in a population count of 34,400 in Canmore. Now, that's over a long period of time, but I just point that out as an indication that there is growth happening in the municipality and that eight years hence from now I'm sure we'll be looking at the city of Canmore as opposed to the town.

**The Chair:** When you say that it's the largest municipality, you mean in both the existing riding and the proposed riding?

**Mr. Ridley:** Yes. That's correct. Thank you.

Further, I want to comment on the Springbank area structure plan in Rocky View county; and they received final approval last March, almost a year ago, planning a total of 20,145 persons in the Springbank area of the county. As well, the Harmony community, which is currently in our riding: they have an approved conceptual scheme. It's only a 6 per cent build-out, but they're projected to add another 4,480 residences. I'm not sure how many folks that would equate to.

For today, though, in my previous in-person presentation I offered the opinion that the Springbank area east of highway 22 should not become part of a western Calgary riding but, rather, remain in the present Banff-Kananaskis riding, and that was due to their rural acreage nature. That view of mine has not changed. However, I believe your jobs are clearly to consider forms of give and take in deciding boundaries, in part due to various community characteristics. Geography, transportation corridors, nature of employment and economic prosperity, natural areas and adjacent parks, government services: these are just some of the characteristics that help define community and thereby electoral districts. I do recognize, however, that healthy communities and ridings can as well have dissimilar characteristics.

I think you've done a good job of keeping the numbers of electors where they need to be by adding Jasper townsite to the proposed Banff-Jasper riding and moving Springbank to the proposed Cochrane-Springbank riding, whose residents now share some commonalities. I call these folks *rurbanites*.

For instance, I do personally know many acreage owners within the Rocky View county and residents of Cochrane that commute regularly to the city for specialty services, postsecondary education, health maintenance, use of parks and cultural venues, religious services, physical exercise, in-and-out employment, government services, transportation options, et cetera. The characteristics of many of the electors in the proposed new Cochrane-Springbank riding suggest that similar challenges related to ongoing and new government services needed in both areas will need to be in part supported by the MLA elected. Again, just a reference to the development growth in the two areas of Springbank and Cochrane is definitely anticipated.

Now, you've included new geographic areas in the proposed Banff-Jasper riding, which I agree wholeheartedly with. For instance, Indigenous residents of O'Chiese First Nation and Sunchild First Nation: keeping them in the MLA's view along with the Stoney Nation, Tsuut'ina, and Eden Valley treaty people is important. As well, some rural West Yellowhead areas are included.

The interim report, in my view, cojoins the three mountain towns – Banff, Canmore, and Jasper – in a way that would enable the MLA, whoever that is, to consider provincial policies and programs that could assist all three municipalities, face similar challenges

associated with economic development, specifically tourism. To manage tourism in a sustainable way, Bow valley towns and the MD of Bighorn and Jasper need to feel that they're working toward common goals, protecting the most important natural environment while encouraging responsible human use.

The Bow valley is tight with Jasper. Some businesses in Jasper, for example, are extensions of parent firms in the Bow valley. Take the Fairmont chain. There are three extensive properties in those three areas: Banff, Lake Louise, and Jasper. There are many tour operators and transportation companies plying the parkway year-round, connections among artists and the mountaineering and outdoor pursuits community, and we both share the same electoral boundary to the west; that would be the B.C. border. Travel Alberta markets the Jasper and Banff parks collectively, not "Come enjoy the north" or "Come enjoy the south," so the existing division of boundaries on a north-south basis does not in my view serve the residents, businesses, and electors as well as what you've proposed, roughly an east-west recommended boundary.

The towering Rocky Mountains to the west of us feature the continental divide running south from Jasper, past Lake Louise, and at Canmore swings far south into Kananaskis country, the height of land being the natural boundary. The western boundary and lands proposed east herein comprise unique and properly managed environments that serve both to attract visitors and deserve rigorous levels of protection. I did not previously think to provide the suggestion of including Jasper and Yellowhead, Foothills in the existing Banff-Kananaskis ED, so I wish to thank whoever came up with that. Cheers from Canmore.

11:05

**The Chair:** I think it was the MLA.

**Mr. Ridley:** In conclusion, I would like to validate the give and take you have applied in deciding boundaries for the proposed Banff-Jasper, Canmore electoral district.

That's the conclusion. I'm happy to answer any questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you. I'll open it up to the commission, but I have got to ask this question. If we maintain this proposed electoral district, are you satisfied with the name?

**Mr. Ridley:** Whoa. I'd prefer to have the largest municipality reflected in the name.

**The Chair:** Which is consistent with our philosophy.

**Mr. Ridley:** But I will accept other suggestions.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Evans, any questions?

**Mr. Evans:** No. Thank you for your submissions.

**Mrs. Samson:** Do you have any comment on the Nordegg and area included in this electoral division?

**Mr. Ridley:** I don't know a lot about the demographics of those areas, but I would prefer to see the boundaries set as they have been proposed. So Nordegg being part of, I think, Mountain View currently . . .

**Mrs. Samson:** Clearwater.

**Mr. Ridley:** Oh, Clearwater. Yeah.

I think that would likely be best served by remaining in there. I haven't given that much thought, to be fair.

**Mrs. Samson:** Okay. Thank you

**The Chair:** Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you, sir. I'd like to review again for me, because I can't write fast enough, your sense of the population growth in the two or three different communities you had identified. Could you just run through that again for me?

**Mr. Ridley:** Sure. You bet. Canmore has a population of 18,000 currently, of which 12,000 are permanent residents and 6,000 are what we call weekenders or nonpermanent residents. I'd just highlight that that creates huge pressure on the community. Although those 6,000 folks are not electors, they expect and demand services provided in part through provincial resources.

Same thing with Banff. Banff has a limit on their growth, and they are at 10,000 residents, of which most can vote. They are under extreme pressure as well because they are approaching 3 and a half million visitors per year. Imagine taking the city of Calgary, which is approaching 2 million, I believe, and adding 25 per cent nonpermanent users of facilities to the city.

I just want to point out that although the number of electors in Canmore is perhaps less than in other communities that would have that number of people, there's still an expectation that services would be provided, government services: municipal, provincial, and federal. Then, of course, add in that Jasper has got about 4,700 residents there

Just getting back to Springbank and Cochrane, we see Cochrane exploding. I don't know what the rate of growth is, but I do have context in my last presentation that defines what the growth rates are in the Springbank area through their area structure plans developed by and approved by the county there and then Cochrane growing as well and Harmony.

Those numbers, again, were Canmore moving from 17,200 to 34,400, Springbank planning a total of 20,145. That's not growth of 20,000; that's at build-out. And Harmony: 4,480 residences.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Mr. Clark.

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you. As someone who's lived in Canmore for some time and has a strong familiarity with that part of the world, I'm curious. How often do you get to Crowsnest Pass? Is that part of your orbit? Is there a connection? As a former town councillor of Canmore do you spend time there? Do you feel that's part of it, or is that somewhere else?

**Mr. Ridley:** Yeah, it's somewhere else. To my knowledge the municipality has not established any relationships, you know. Highway is closed in the wintertime down highway 40 at Highwood pass, so there's not a lot of traffic and community exchange back and forth between the southern communities and the upper Highwood and over into Kananaskis valley.

**Mr. Clark:** It's helpful. Thank you.

**Mr. Ridley:** Yeah.

**The Chair:** Well, thank you, Mr. Ridley. Your presentation is most appreciative, and we will have something on our lapels from here on in thinking of your presentation.

**Mr. Ridley:** Thank you very much for your time, folks.

**The Chair:** Please remain if you're able.

**Mr. Ridley:** Sure.

**The Chair:** Our next presenter is Sabrina Grover. Is Sabrina present?

**Miss Grover:** I didn't bring any presents. Sorry. I didn't know that that was standard.

**The Chair:** Well, you get five minutes less then.

**Miss Grover:** Damn it.

All right. Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to present today to the boundaries commission. My name is Sabrina Grover, and I'm a resident of Calgary-Mountain View. Much of what I believe I will say today you've already previously heard in evidence. It's part of your reports, and you've already seen it in your submissions. But today is one of those rare occasions where I don't believe that repetition is for repetition's sake or just to hear the sound of my own voice. I think that today I'm here to support the commission's proposed revisions to Calgary's electoral boundaries and to underscore why these changes are not only appropriate but essential for effective representation in this rapidly growing city. I will use my time to speak overall to the city of Calgary maps, both option A and option B as presented by EBC, with a particular interest in the inner city of Calgary, focusing on Calgary-Klein, Calgary-Mountain View, Calgary-Buffalo, and the newly proposed riding of Calgary-Confluence, and particularly focus on how I think that the changes you have recommended support the existing strains that Calgaryans have seen on public education and housing diversity as the city grows.

Again, a lot of what I want to say I think you've heard before. Of course, Calgary is no longer experiencing episodic growth. It's experiencing sustained, compounding population change, demonstrated over the last 10 years of immigration. Alberta has seen more than 700,000 people come since the 2021 census. Most of that growth has been in Calgary and Edmonton. Calgary alone is projected to approach 2 million residents by the end of the decade. That is driven not just by interprovincial and international migration but also by migration within Alberta. I believe that the stats show that between 2016 and 2020 more than 60,000 Albertans moved to Calgary from elsewhere in the province, plus the tens of thousands that arrived from across Canada. That means that Calgary is consistently leading as a major Canadian city in population growth and also that our, you know, services – housing, education, health care – continue to experience the strain and require adequate representation in order to maintain this growth.

The boundaries drawn today should be resilient enough to serve Calgary's population not just today but into the future and, I would say, beyond 2030. I don't think that this is a commission that we want to repeat every year. It's something that should be able to represent Albertans into the future with at least the next decade in mind.

I think the core of my presentation is really that representation is not abstract. It's how services get delivered. It's not just about voting parity; it's about how individuals have a voice in government deliberation and access to decision-makers, particularly where these communities are growing quickly. In particular, Calgary's growth is placing measurable strains on core public services. Schools in the public system are operating at or beyond capacity in most neighbourhoods. The health care system we know has struggled to keep pace with demand both in the family practice but also in the emergency room sector. Housing supply continues to be under acute pressure, affordability is a concern, and transportation continues to be stretched thin. If representation doesn't keep pace with growth and investment does not keep pace with need, when that happens, fast-growing communities lose their

ability to advocate effectively for funding, infrastructure, and services.

11:15

Personally I've seen this already in the public school system in Calgary, at which I have worked in ancillary ways. With the exception of last year CBE enrolment has surged and put immense pressure on the Calgary board of education. Last year only one new student was added, but in the previous years over 17,000 students were added. That puts an enormous strain on the school system as it exists, and without effective representation to the provincial government, communities are left suffering and vulnerable students and children are left behind, especially those with specialized learning needs.

It's also important to have a keen eye on housing. The diversity of housing needs to be supported by good representation and good investment. That means MLA representation. Presently 92 per cent of Calgarians believe that housing is too expensive. Nationally 49 per cent of Canadians believe that building smaller, more attainable homes should be a priority, and 51 per cent believe that the missing middle housing should be a priority.

Why does that even matter in this conversation? Housing affordability isn't an abstract policy debate. It's a direct consequence of how well growing urban communities are represented. Calgary's housing pressures are being driven by rapid population growth, constrained land supply, and infrastructure that has not kept pace. Decisions about zoning, infrastructure investment, transit, schools, and health services all shape whether housing can be delivered faster, at lower cost, and in the forms that people actually need. That means good MLA representation.

In constituencies that are too large or where urban communities are blended with rural ones that face very different housing realities it becomes harder for elected representatives to meaningfully advocate for the solutions that represent urban density, affordability pressures, and service demand. Housing challenges don't exist in isolation. They're inseparable for transportation capacity, school construction, health care access, and municipal provincial coordination.

Effective representation ensures that the scale and urgency of housing pressures in cities like Calgary are heard in the Legislature with the boundaries that reflect where people live and how quickly these communities are changing. We need to make sure that housing does not outpace the political voice and that affordability improves and doesn't worsen.

Overall I would like to say that the commission has been clear that its task is not to impose rigid mathematical parity but to achieve effective representation consistent with Alberta laws and Canadian jurisdiction. By recommending the additional seat in Calgary and perhaps an additional seat yet to come and adjusting the boundaries to reflect actual population distribution, I think that the commission has responded to the verified, up-to-date population data. I think that it has respected the communities of interest, and I think that it has prepared the democratic map for the next decade, not the last one.

In closing I want to thank the commission for its work and recognize that the additional seat in Calgary will match the scale and pace of Calgary's growth, and those proposed boundary changes respond to the city's needs directly. Thank you for your time and your careful consideration, and, again, I just wanted to approve of the recommendations of the city that the commission has already made.

**The Chair:** Well, thank you so much, ma'am, for that very concise presentation.

Mr. Evans, any questions or comments?

**Mr. Evans:** No. Thank you for presenting again.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you for your presentation. Very good, and thank you for the compliments. I like it.

**Miss Grover:** I don't come with gifts but I come with compliments.

**The Chair:** Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** No, I don't have any questions. Again, thank you very much. It is a very nice overview and I appreciate that.

**Mr. Clark:** Yeah, thank you. Compliments won't sway us, but we do appreciate it all the same, so thank you.

There's one stat you quoted – I was just curious – that I hadn't heard before, and that was, if I wrote it down correctly or heard correctly, 60,000 people in migration to Calgary from other parts of Alberta. Is that correct, and what time frame, and what's that source?

**Miss Grover:** Between 2016 and 2020. It was just before the pandemic, so I don't know what it would be since the pandemic, and I believe it was the census that noted that.

**Mr. Clark:** The Canada federal census?

**Miss Grover:** Yeah.

**Mr. Clark:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** And just for your information, I may have misunderstood you, but we do this – sorry. The legislation demands that an electoral boundaries commission is struck every eight to 10 years or, in other words, every second election cycle, so I guess I've not really done that. So 34 will be another one, so we are thinking of that, certainly.

**Miss Grover:** The next decade. Exactly. Yeah.

I think it's just important that, like, the recommendations that you make today are actually sustainable to 2034 and don't kind of outpace growth, say, at 2030. With Calgary in particular projected to meet 2 million citizens by then, we're not going to have another opportunity to reinforce these boundaries for another five years, so it's important.

**The Chair:** We are going to recommend that other Albertans not move to Calgary in the next eight years to skew the numbers.

**Miss Grover:** Perfect. Calgary is not calling. That's on *Hansard* now.

**Mr. Clark:** That may not be a unanimous recommendation.

**Miss Grover:** Okay. Thank you so much.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

Kelli Taylor? Good morning, ma'am. Just have a seat and tell us your name again for the record and what riding you live in and what ridings you wish to discuss.

**Ms Taylor:** My name is Kelli Taylor. I live in Calgary-North West, and I mainly want to address those boundaries. Some of my comments may be slightly general, but that's my focus.

Thank you for having me today. I don't have gifts or really specific compliments, but. . .

**Dr. Martin:** It will be noted.

**Ms Taylor:** I know. I'm sorry.

I will say I bring some experience. I've lived in that constituency for over 26 years, and I've seen it sort of shrink into what it is now landwise. We used to have all of Calgary-Foothills and Calgary-Hawkwood, and now Calgary-North West has been about the same for the last two or three elections anyhow, and I note that the recommendation is to maintain the current boundaries without any change. I do respect that, but I would like to propose some expansion. If you could refer to the maps that I gave you, the current – these are so amateur, but I realized this morning that most of you don't live in the city and may not be familiar with what I'm talking about.

**The Chair:** Don't apologize. This is a real good picture.

**Ms Taylor:** I whipped those together this morning, and I thought they would be helpful. So the yellow highlighting on those maps shows the current boundary, and the communities that I've written in black pen are the current communities. Anything in blue and outside of that is what I'm proposing as a bit of an expansion. I've gone way off my script, so here we go.

I guess I'd like to say that these nearby rural communities act very much like we do in the city. People live there because they like to, I guess, access amenities that are close by at the edge of the city, and there's a lot of interaction. I felt like the Bow River is, of course, a fairly natural geographical boundary, and 144th Avenue to the north, which is also known as Burma Road, is not a major corridor, but it's close to the city limits or above the city limits. Much of that proposed area is low density. Those are small acreages, people that have moved out mostly from the city. They will not add significantly to the number of voters, and the people there interact quite regularly.

The rural people will go into the urban communities for work, for recreation, shopping, medical appointments, worship, restaurants, and so on, and the residents from our Calgary-North West communities visit areas west of the city to the north and south of Crowchild Trail to visit places such as Centre Street Church, Glenbow Ranch provincial park, Haskayne Legacy park, Bears paw Golf Club, the Bears paw-Glendale community centre, RockPointe church, and Bears paw Lions Club. I didn't put all of those on there, but you get the sense, and the Lions Club has a very active farmers' market that is seasonal but well attended. There are strong social and economic ties between these residents, and these amenities themselves I think would consider their catchment areas to transcend the city limits to include both urban and rural residents.

*11:25*

Much of the area to the north sort of on the east side: you'll see I've put Lafarge, that has a big gravel operation, and Spy Hill is there, which has a prison and a landfill. Really other than the prison – I just realize as I'm talking that the prison really does have people who are voters, so I don't know what their numbers are or how that would impact my suggestion. But there's another road, 85th street that's to the west of the prison, that could be another thought for a boundary because this part to the east is not a huge population factor, if you will.

During the many years that I was a volunteer director with the community association in my community of Tuscany, I experienced a number of interactions with residents in Bears paw and Watermark when considering our planning and development applications. Up until that time I'm not sure people from our communities interacted all that much, but we made a big effort to do so and discussed how various proposals would benefit or harm our communities overall.

For example, we worked together to advocate for the widening of Twelve Mile Coulee Road, which is the current city limit and boundary. It was very unsafe until fairly recently. A few years ago it was widened and is a big improvement for all of us. Our concerns were often quite similar, and we made good progress when we worked together. We managed to not only work with our own residents but the city of Calgary and the municipality of Rocky View county, and we had very good interactions together.

Efforts, I believe, are continuing now. I'm no longer a director with the community association, but I believe that the planning people are working on the application for a development called Ascension, which is a retail and residential development just barely into the county, the corner of Crowchild and Twelve Mile Coulee. If it proceeds, this development will certainly rely on Calgary residents as well as those in the rural area for success, and we'll be looking for proper representation for the work they do.

As the rural areas have developed, I've noticed that many of my former neighbours have made the choice to move to, you know, adjacent rural properties. They're small acreages, like I mentioned, and they have maintained their social and economic ties to the people and businesses they live near in Calgary-North West. We continue to shop at the same grocery stores. We play pickle ball together at the same recreation facilities, and we socialize at the same restaurants and coffee shops. In fact, when I leave here today, I'll be joining a mixed group of rural and urban residents who live near me and play pickleball with me so we can have lunch and visit. Extending this constituency seems to support the priorities of sustainable and cohesive communities and follows the major geographical feature of the Bow River as well as significant transportation corridors.

In conclusion, I encourage you to support the expansion and integration of the nearby rural area to the west and north of Calgary-North West when determining the new electoral boundaries in 2026 and to consider a similar approach to other constituencies which may be in a similar situation.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms Taylor. My first question: your proposed addition obviously includes Bears paw.

**Ms Taylor:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Do you have a sense of the population that you're proposing to add into this?

**Ms Taylor:** You know, I don't know the exact numbers. I know that these are very spread apart acreages, I guess, and I don't expect that the population is high, but – I'm sorry – I don't have that number.

**The Chair:** Okay. Good.

Mr. Evans, any questions or comments?

**Mr. Evans:** No, but thank you very much for your presentation. Much appreciated.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you for the map. That was most helpful. That visual is everything.

**Ms Taylor:** Well, if I'd realized – as I say, this morning I didn't know what we would have in front of us, and I thought that might be helpful.

**Mrs. Samson:** Yeah. That was great. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** Yes. Thank you and, again, thanks for the map. I'm not from Calgary, so people rattle off neighbourhood names as if I would know, so it's good to have a map as reference.

I take it that the thrust of your argument is that these ancillary communities, if I can put it that way, are actually in real time and real life linked very closely with those we would regard as urban neighbourhoods, so you're making an argument about communities of interest.

**Ms Taylor:** Well, that's true, and I guess something I didn't say is that most of these communities within the constituency are, you know, essentially built out, and a lot of the kind of minor growth has gone to these areas that are not going to become high density around that. So a lot of our people have kind of nudged out, and they do act like each other.

**Dr. Martin:** Yeah. We've had long discussions about this kind of situation, typically under the heading of "hybrids," which really doesn't carry the subtlety of it all, and other conversations where you have a dichotomy between urban versus rural. What your map shows me is that there's such a gradation of forms of life, to be fancy about it, that it's worth us reflecting upon these kinds of communities. You're not baling hay out there. You're going to the golf course.

**Ms Taylor:** When you go further than this, you know, we get towards Canmore. It's very different – right? – but these are people that enjoy the amenities of the city, but they want a little more space, I think. So, yes.

**Dr. Martin:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Clark.

**Mr. Clark:** No. Thank you so much for coming in. Especially that map is top-notch. It was really helpful, so thank you.

**Ms Taylor:** Well, thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you for coming, and please remain if you can.

**Ms Taylor:** I will for a little bit.

**The Chair:** Oh, but pickleball is calling. I remember that.  
Is Kelli Taylor . . .

**Dr. Martin:** That was Kelli Taylor.

**The Chair:** Well, I just asked if she's still here. Come on. Boy.  
Amy Shantz.

**Ms Shantz:** Yeah. Thanks.

**The Chair:** Good morning.

**Ms Shantz:** Good morning.

**The Chair:** Have a seat.

**Ms Shantz:** Thanks for having me, and thanks for your work.  
And thanks for the invitation, Greg.

**The Chair:** Shantz as in S-c-h-a-n-t-z?

**Ms Shantz:** It used to be, in the German part of Switzerland, s-c-h, but it's been Canadianized as s-h. Yeah. S-h-a-n-t-z.

**Mrs. Samson:** Got it.

**The Chair:** Okay. Kept the Z, though.

**Ms Shantz:** I think there's a PowerPoint. Is there?

You know, when Greg invited me to speak, I thought, "Well, I only want to speak if I have something meaningful to say," and I thought, "Oh, do I have time to talk to my politicians and get some good ideas?" but when I looked at the first proposal, it did tweak a thought in my head. It's a bit of a principle, but rather than self-centred, first, around those of us that are not Indigenous, I wanted to start with using the principle with the Indigenous out of respect for the people that my ancestors colonized.

Okay. The principle that I'm going to take was just reflected in what Kelli said, in trying to help, which I think we all are trying to do with this.

**Mr. Clark:** Can you tell us where you live?

**Ms Shantz:** Oh, sorry. I live currently in Calgary-Buffalo, in the Mission community, which is part of the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association, which is the springboard for what I noticed.

11:35

**Mr. Clark:** Are you speaking about that?

**Ms Shantz:** I will touch on that specifically, but I wanted to get into just a principle, first, of divisions, and that is related to both the laws that affect us, the associations that engage and represent us, and the interrelationships with our elected officials.

But as a first example I wanted to mention: could we consider not dividing up the treaties of Alberta when we make boundaries, because there are legalities within each treaty that are unique? I reached out to a couple of Indigenous people before I shared this. I didn't hear back, so I didn't get enough engagement on their ideas, but the one thing I thought about here was that when we look at people needing to have certain laws or even councils or committees representing them, nations when they organize, we often see statements by the chiefs of the treaty. So if we could avoid altering the treaty boundaries and keep each treaty within a particular boundary, that would be wonderful, I think.

**The Chair:** Do we, in our interim report?

**Ms Shantz:** Pardon me?

**The Chair:** Do we alter them in our interim report?

**Mrs. Samson:** Yeah, we do.

**Dr. Martin:** Yeah, we do.

**Ms Shantz:** And then specifically what I could guarantee you – now, thank you that both of you knew that right away, because I, off my head . . .

**The Chair:** I wanted to hear it from you, though.

**Ms Shantz:** I'm sorry. I didn't actually go back and analyze all that. I just had a sense that it was, from the angles of boundaries, but I didn't analyze the detail. What I did analyze, though, was that in my own community of Cliff Bungalow- Mission – I'm in Mission, but the association of the community is Cliff Bungalow- Mission – one of the proposals cuts that in half, so that Cliff Bungalow is in one boundary and Mission is in the other if I read the maps correctly.

My advocacy here for keeping Edmonton and Calgary community associations within the same constituency is that

community association boards like to build relationships with the elected representatives. It often includes messages in association communications. Whether it's online news or a bulletin, there's often a statement from the elected officials: the councillor, the MLA, and the MP. So it's nice not to have two in the same level of government, and to have motivation that there's enough people for that representative to think it's worth their time in doing that for them, and not to say, "Oh, well, there are only 300 people," or "only 1,500 of that community association is in mine, so I won't communicate with that association when I do with the others where I'm fully represented."

Then, also, you know, I've seen MLAs come to community association AGMs. It kind of works both ways with initiatives, coming out to, say, the Scenic Acres Stampede barbecue, speaking to the last presentation in Calgary northwest. I was the constituency president with one of the parties for years. It does make it more difficult if we start to chop these community associations out.

Then the other point would be forums and debates during the process of elections. It's quite common that it's community associations in Edmonton and Calgary that are hosting the forums and debates, and if we cut those people into two different constituencies, which forum are you a part of hosting? I can tell you that in Calgary-North West usually Scenic Acres, Tuscany, and Rocky Ridge, Royal Oak will join together and do one forum that's productive with all of the MLA candidates. Now, in some areas – I know of one time in Acadia, I think, every community association did their own thing and the candidates had to go to three or four forums, but it's nice to kind of optimize the way that they can work together and represent. There are the community associations, just like I first mentioned, say, with the treaties and the chiefs that organize within that treaty. It's a way where we have a group of representatives that are already trying to be in touch with their members and talking about their concerns, and we're not splitting that up.

**Mrs. Samson:** That's it? You were on a roll there.

**The Chair:** Well, thank you. Thank you for your accompanying PowerPoint as well.

Mr. Clark, any questions or comments?

**Mr. Clark:** Maybe just talk a little bit more about sort of communities of interest. I mean, it's really sort of an interesting thought experiment, kind of what belongs with what. That's part of the challenge we have, right? And counterbalancing that are two really big factors. One is that we have also effective representation to consider. In particular, the far north: it's a real challenge. Just the vast geography is a huge challenge, but also not tipping the balance, you know, too far. And then just the simple reality in a city like Calgary: we have dense population; you need to draw a line somewhere, and there's no such thing as perfect.

**Ms Shantz:** One example, if we can kind of combine what Kelli and I spoke of: I know she mentioned Glenbow Ranch, but I also know that Glenbow Ranch has a close relationship with Cochrane. They are actually slightly closer to Cochrane than to Calgary, you know, as Calgary builds out. So there is that kind of when are people equally as much – if you look at the Driftpile reserve – Slave Lake, High Prairie, Grande Prairie – Grande Prairie was the biggest city for major things. Slave Lake was medium. High Prairie was in between Driftpile and Grande Prairie, but it was smaller than Slave Lake. So depending on what you needed, did you go to High Prairie? Did you go the opposite direction to Slave Lake, or did you jump further past High Prairie to Grande Prairie?

I think there are those aspects to look at in terms of: what types of essential services are people getting? There's a difference

between going somewhere to get an item and having that area be part of your community, right? Like, I would think that for Driftpile, High Prairie might be closer to the community. Grande Prairie: you might go there for some things, but you're not going to feel a part of Grande Prairie.

I actually started brainstorming, and I wish I was faster at admin and pulling things up. You know, I've got some friends that are brilliant at this, but we could look at this as, like: where is your water source, right? Like, are you taking water from the Bears paw, or are you taking water from some other area? How concerned are you about the eastern slopes? Where does the water flow? Which communities care about the same source of water? Which communities care about the same mine that's polluting? Which communities have an electrical pathway such that if some place gets disrupted, they lose electricity at the same time?

You know, I think there are lots of different ways that we can see who would be advocating for the same things with the same people. If we end up having four MLAs hearing from a small number of people about the same topic, it might have less effect than if one MLA heard from four times that number of people, and it's a big percentage of their constituency. I think that there are community things, there are infrastructure things, and there are various types of resources.

**The Chair:** You're touching on the challenges that we have as a commission directly.

Dr. Martin, any questions?

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you.

Yes. I certainly hope that you're going to leave your presentation behind, particularly for the map of treaties 6, 7, and 8.

**Ms Shantz:** It was e-mailed to Aaron, which is why it's on this computer.

**Dr. Martin:** Okay. Super. I want to come to your second slide, which I have up on the big screen here, for your remarks about community associations.

**Ms Shantz:** Oh, here. That's my fourth slide.

**Dr. Martin:** Oh, I'm sorry.

We are cognizant of this. We had a particular discussion of it in Edmonton, where the community leagues are very heavily embedded and have been since, you know, 1910.

**The Chair:** Just after the treaty.

**Dr. Martin:** Yeah.

We're very mindful of those sets of community dynamics, and we try to not bust them up. I can't speak to Calgary quite as much as my colleague. I think he has been equally attentive to making sure we didn't do something foolish in that regard.

11:45

**Ms Shantz:** Well, I think there was one map that split Mission and Cliff Bungalow.

**Dr. Martin:** Well, that's really where I was . . .

**Ms Shantz:** It's partly because sometimes it's misleading. If you see a name of a community, maybe what you want to do in Calgary and Edmonton is pull up the list of community associations and see how many have a double community in them. That's when it can be missed. If you look at a map and just see Mission and just see

Cliff Bungalow, if you don't know any different, you might think Cliff Bungalow has their own association and Mission has their own association, but they don't. It's only one amalgamated association that does the work, that has the potlucks and has the film nights and would have the AGM. It's probably a minority, but it just happened that you split down that particular one.

**Dr. Martin:** Your estimate of what MLAs should probably do with regard to community associations is very similar to what ward councillors, in fact, do as well.

**Ms Shantz:** Exactly. Yeah.

**Dr. Martin:** I mean, that is a very efficient way of reaching out to particular communities.

**Ms Shantz:** Yeah. I mean, it depends on the MP. I know in Calgary-North West the Scenic Acres president had been there for many, many years, and I think he drove a bit of that, but the MLA and the MP were always front and centre there. At least it gives that opportunity – in my area, you know, I haven't seen my MP interact much with my current constituency association, but at least it makes it easier. Also, provincial constituencies are almost half the size of wards and federal, so it is harder for MPs. MPs, of course, are flying to Ottawa and back, and then they have a twice as big area. MLAs have almost half as much the size, and if they have three or four community associations within a city in their area, that's manageable, pretty easy.

**Mr. Clark:** Can I just add one sort of small point of information? I looked it up. Mission and Cliff Bungalow have been split since the 2010 boundaries.

**Ms Shantz:** Thank you, Greg.

**Mr. Clark:** So that 2010, 2017, and the proposed – yeah. It's one of those.

**The Chair:** So don't blame us.

**Mr. Clark:** Yeah. Exactly. I'll give you some phone numbers you can call. Sorry.

**Ms Shantz:** There are a couple of weird things. I mean, this is an area that Greg knows really well because he edged on this, you know, on the one boundary of his. There are some weird things around Calgary-Elbow, I think, and Calgary-Buffalo and Calgary-Currie where there are certain times where it's like: why do you want a tiny cut-out on this side of Crowchild? Like, typically that's not a big – I mean, sure, you might have kids going to school there. You might have certain things, but you're not going to bike there as likely unless you're in one of the big corridors that has a really good path to go straight across. Glenmore and Crowchild are kind of just like Macleod Trail. There are some areas that are kind of bigger divides of community than others, so I find sometimes those boundaries have been a little weird at times.

Anyways.

**The Chair:** No, no. Remain there. We may not be finished.

Mrs. Samson, any questions?

**Mrs. Samson:** I just wanted to comment that the kinds of things you're talking about occur in Calgary and Edmonton, the big cities. I mean, it's really complex, one overlay over the next over the next, to try and get those boundaries in. I thank you for your input because it's so much more than what we tackle.

**Ms Shantz:** I really think that on an actual communication and interaction basis in Calgary and Edmonton the community associations are the biggest driver of it. Those should be the foundation. Then the other things are: what other things also play in? But I think we should start with keeping community associations intact.

Obviously, in rural it gets a lot more complex in a whole different – you almost have to think: well, what should my major thing be? Now, you could ask people sometimes: "What's your major news source? Are you reading the Grande Prairie one? Are you reading the Slave Lake one? Are you reading this?" That might give an idea of where people are communicating, interacting with. But I think that is a big piece of representation. If you don't talk to someone, they're not going to represent you.

**Mrs. Samson:** Exactly. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Evans, any questions?

**Mr. Evans:** Hold on.

**Ms Shantz:** Oh, okay.

**Mr. Evans:** I wanted to get some clarification on what you were conveying to us about treaties. Did I understand that you wanted the treaties – are you suggesting that they would be in one electoral district?

**Ms Shantz:** I mean, some of the treaty areas are quite large, and there'd be multiple constituencies there. But I just wouldn't want to see the boundary be split between two different . . .

**The Chair:** Overlap.

**Ms Shantz:** I wouldn't want, you know, like, say, the Peace River one to need to include – I don't know. Peace River is huge. Let's say the Slave Lake one. I wouldn't want the Slave Lake one to be including part of that upper area and part of – what is it? – Treaty 8 and Treaty 7. They're under different treaty laws and expectations and chief councils.

**Mr. Evans:** The treaty doesn't impact . . .

**Ms Shantz:** But even their chiefs, the way the chiefs organize. You'll often see statements of, you know, "the Treaty 7 chiefs have made this statement on this area" or "the Treaty 8 chiefs."

For me, I think some people think that things that are ritualistic or, you know, maybe making a statement or doing a land acknowledgement are just in name, but I think ways where we show that organizations that affect somebody else's life matter or just taking time or priority to say what affects you: it doesn't affect me – right? – but does it affect them?

**Mr. Evans:** What are your thoughts on boundaries going beyond county or municipal boundaries for the electoral districts? Is your position the same on those as it is with respect to treaties?

**Ms Shantz:** Yeah. I mean, you make a good point. Again, now we have councils, right?

**Mrs. Samson:** Another overlay.

**Ms Shantz:** Yeah. It's a case of both. How are our Indigenous councils organized in chiefs, and how are our non-Indigenous councils organized? I think both matter, and I just wanted to ensure that . . .

**Mr. Evans:** Like, your position is the same with respect to both of those if I understand.

**Ms Shantz:** Yeah. I just wanted to make sure that, since I'm a descendant of early colonialism, I was a part of saying that I want to start by saying: you matter first. I want to bring one topic up for consideration, and it could be further investigated. I might have not done a good job of it, but I wanted to make sure it was on the table.

**Mrs. Samson:** Right.

**The Chair:** Ms Shantz, thank you for your presentation and your PowerPoint. We will have it. Thank you.

**Ms Shantz:** Thanks.

**The Chair:** I believe that leaves us with one other presenter. Mr. Graham Sucha. Please make yourself comfortable, and tell us what electoral division you're from and which ones you want to comment on.

**Mr. Sucha:** I currently reside in the electoral district of Calgary-Glenmore. My overarching comments will probably apply to a good portion of the deep south of Calgary, most specifically likely the southwest quadrants of those areas. As a note, in my day job I serve as the executive director of the Graduate Students' Association for the University of Calgary. However, my comments will be tied to sort of two positions that I bring to the table, one as a private citizen and then a little bit that I may touch on as a former Member of the Legislative Assembly for the constituency of Calgary-Shaw.

First, you know, I want to echo some of the comments that Miss Grover presented during her presentation. I recognize it's no easy task for the commission to come up with these boundaries. People get very emotional about where they live and the outcomes that come of those things. With that being said, I think, all things considered, you've done the best with what has been given to you. To sort of semiquote a former colleague of mine who may be at your table, my hope of these comments is to provide some feedback that may make this even better.

When I was looking at the interim report, one thing that caught my eye was actually the Edmonton-West-Enoch constituency, which I thought was something very bold and actually would probably provide some really good representation in that area because of the integration that's coming from the Enoch Cree Nation and the city of Edmonton.

**11:55**

The one thing I've realized is that the city of Calgary has the same thing going on with Tsuut'ina Nation and the south quadrant. Currently right now the Tsuut'ina Nation is undergoing a transformation following the development of the southwest ring road. There's the community of Taza, that is actually in development as we speak. Currently if you live in that part of Calgary, it is actually very hard to tell where Tsuut'ina begins and the city of Calgary ends. One thing I would strongly advise – however, I will preface that I do not speak for Tsuut'ina Nation in any way – is that you may want to consider the integration of Tsuut'ina Nation into Calgary as well with the sort of consideration of communities of interest, that has been a common theme throughout your conversations.

You know, I think if you look at what is the current riding boundary that they have, which is the Banff-Jasper one, I would strongly suggest that the prerogatives of that community and the new residents that will come into that area may be very different

than those who reside in the national parks. As people move into that community, residents and constituents may actually be taken aback by the concept that they belong to the constituency of Banff-Jasper and the national parks area.

This may also help you address some of the sort of feedback that you have received surrounding some of the hybrid ridings. If there is a decision or consideration to shift away from potentially a Calgary-Okotoks riding or shift away from a Calgary-West riding, you could easily encompass some of these areas to off-set any amendments that you may opt to choose to make. Or even, as one of the earlier speakers was speaking – the Sundre mayor talked about integrating that community into the Banff-Jasper riding. If you were wanting to do that, that could off-set by integrating the Tsuut'ina Nation into the city of Calgary.

With that being said, too, in my former role as an MLA one thing I'll sort of cite as a caution. I was a south representative in the area close to Okotoks, and I will say that at this moment in time that south area of Calgary has a little bit of contention that may put a future MLA in a very difficult place if they have to represent both Calgary and sort of the south Foothills area and Okotoks. One is the strong likelihood that if annexation occurs, it's likely going to occur in the south. Also, there are currently some very strong negotiations between the town of Okotoks and the city of Calgary surrounding things like sharing uses of water right now, too. So it may put that MLA at odds as to who they represent if they are looking to broaden those conversations. As the government representative during that time I had regular conversations with the council members and mayor of Okotoks surrounding that specific matter. It was one of heavy contention, especially because the development of Okotoks actually relies on potentially successfully negotiating a deal with the city of Calgary for shared water there.

The final note that I want to touch on is actually the name of Calgary-Shaw. I don't know if this has been brought to your attention. If you read Wikipedia – I don't believe this to be true – it's named after the former Liberal leader Joseph Tweed Shaw. However, I believe it to actually be named after Samuel Shaw, who's actually a settler and homesteader in the Fish Creek area. There are actually two communities in that area that are named after him, Shawnee Slopes and Shawnessy. Both proposed boundary redraws that you provided have actually removed those interested communities from the namesake of that constituency. Subsequently, the constituencies don't actually sit in the historical area that the namesake is from.

One area of solution that I might suggest is actually swapping the names of Calgary-Shaw and Calgary-Lougheed to resolve that solution as Calgary-Lougheed does carry sort of a historical representation of the late Peter Lougheed; however, it doesn't actually carry any significance surrounding it being a historical representation of where he represented. He was a representative of Calgary-West. I think you can still preserve that legacy while also preserving the historical legacy of the constituency's namesake as well.

Those are kind of my points.

**The Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. Sucha:** Kudos to the hard work that you've all done.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your – and I say this respectfully – punchy presentation. Let me summarize, and then I'm going to open it up for questions. You're saying that any hybrid in the south doesn't work. It's inappropriate. You're in favour of option B, basically, in our proposal, right?

**Mr. Sucha:** It wouldn't end the world if you did it, but with that being said, I could see it being very contentious for whatever representative would have to represent that area.

**The Chair:** Probably, yeah.

You would be open and favourable to Tsuut'ina becoming like Enoch in Edmonton?

**Mr. Sucha:** Oh, absolutely. Even on a personal level – and, you know, this may sound hokey – I'm on Tsuut'ina Nation almost every week. I go there to go to the Costco, and I think there are a lot of Calgaryans that are like that. I anticipate that most of the people who live in the Taza area are likely working in Calgary and they're going to be in Calgary regularly as well, too.

**The Chair:** Okay. While we're on the hybrid business and while you're talking about this, you were here when Ms Taylor presented on north of Calgary-North West, bringing basically Bearspaw and that area in. What do you say to that?

**Mr. Sucha:** It would be inappropriate for me to comment on that only because I've never lived in northwest Calgary, so I don't know what I don't know. I can only give you feedback . . .

**The Chair:** You are a former MLA, aren't you?

**Mr. Sucha:** I am, but you know, from where I represented, it's a 50-minute drive to get to that part of Calgary.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'll open it up for the other panel members for questions.

Mr. Evans.

**Mr. Evans:** Okay. I want you to just give me a little more information on how you would view the Tsuut'ina Nation being included into the city. Can you just tell me your thoughts on that?

**Mr. Sucha:** Yeah. If you were to revise that – and granted this, I think, would take a little bit of thoughtful consideration. One area that you could look at is, if you're looking at the Calgary-West county areas: if you wanted to shift that to an entirely Calgary riding, then you could move that riding south.

**Mr. Evans:** We're going to bring up a map here. That's going to be helpful.

**Mr. Sucha:** Yeah. Exactly. Calgary-West-Elbow Valley. You could actually drop the Elbow Valley and make that part of the Tsuut'ina Nation. Alternatively, you could shift Calgary-West and Calgary-Elbow south and then have it integrate with Calgary-Glenmore. Where I live is sort of one community over from Tsuut'ina Nation. If you notice, there's a road that literally moves right through into Tsuut'ina Nation. That's Southland Drive, and there's strong likelihood there's going to be development there as well as near the grey eagle casino, so I think the Calgary-Glenmore area is going to have the most integration with Tsuut'ina Nation.

Also, too, looking at some of your population forecasts, Calgary-Glenmore was under the population sort of threshold from your original proposal, but I don't anticipate there's going to be a lot of development in Calgary-Glenmore. There will be a lot in Calgary-Lougheed because there was restricted development in that part of Calgary until the Ring road was completed, and now you're seeing very aggressive development in Lougheed. So it may help you kind of anticipate and prepare for that very aggressive growth that's going to happen in the next eight years but also allow for really positive integration within communities.

**Mr. Evans:** I'm going to just prepare you for Dr. Martin's question about the Tyvek test. In terms of that growth that you're talking about, that aggressive growth, Dr. Martin has a Tyvek test that he considers growth realizable and something that you can base decisions on when you can see Tyvek on the buildings. So can you tell me about that in terms of the aggressive growth you're talking about in west Calgary?

**Mr. Sucha:** I saw a little bit of this because the southwest Ring road was in development when I was serving in office. The developers bought that land in anticipation of the finishing and completion of the Ring road, and they've been sitting on it for a substantive amount of time. They're wanting the return on investment, and you're already starting to see high-density developments, including condos and apartments, in that area. They've already been constructed. They're starting to move residents in, and also, too, on sort of single detached homes as well. With that being said, I would even contest that the population forecasting that you have probably isn't even representative of what is existing there right now. It probably has a lot more people.

**Mr. Evans:** Can you show us on the map?

**Mr. Sucha:** On this map you don't even see the southwest Ring road. It goes like this right here, and it's all over here. The Tsuut'ina Nation boundary kind of exists right here, and this whole area is under aggressive development.

12:05

**Mr. Evans:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay. Susan, any questions?

**Mrs. Samson:** Just one question. We heard from the MLA for Banff-Kananaskis that with the redraw by us she was pleased with the Indigenous being together. Of course, we have no feedback from the actual Indigenous. What's your thought on that with the suggestion of the Tsuut'ina getting pulled out of that now?

**Mr. Sucha:** From my informed perspective, although granted, again, I don't speak for any of the nations there, the Tsuut'ina are Dene people, and the Stoney Nakoda are Blackfoot. They're two different types of sort of representations. From my perspective, unless they have very strong views on this, I don't think it will have any major impact because you're dealing with two distinct cultures.

**Mrs. Samson:** That's good to know.

**Mr. Evans:** You said Tsuut'ina are Blackfoot?

**Mr. Sucha:** Tsuut'ina are Dene.

**Mr. Evans:** Dene. Okay.

**Mrs. Samson:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

**The Chair:** Thank you.  
Dr. Martin.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you. I'm not going to ask you about the Tyvek test. I think you answered it. We struggled with, you know, how much into the future can we project growth, and I'd said: "Well, we have to discipline ourselves. We can't just take everybody's word for it that anything that's proposed and has a permit might actually come to pass." So I proposed the Tyvek test for our work.

Really, I wanted to ask you about the casino. We were having a discussion a day or two ago about the Enoch Cree Nation casino,

which is the largest casino in western Canada. It generates enormous amounts of wealth. The reserve is enormously wealthy, and it employs over a thousand people, only two hundred of whom are members of the band. That's a very strong argument for the linkages into Edmonton as normally understood. We have in fact received a letter from a member of the Tsuut'ina Nation saying: hey, do what you did with Enoch because the precedent is fabulous. I'm just curious about the economic driver here. I suspect it's, well, Costco, yes, but those are ground rents. But the casino will have employment for loads of people both on and off the reserve. Is that your sense of it as well?

**Mr. Sucha:** I would say so. You know, it's an all-encompassing event centre. I've been to two concerts at that casino this year, and often if you look at the sort of list of all the tour sites, they're also going to Enoch Cree Nation as well, too.

**Dr. Martin:** Yeah, they are. I mean, you know, if I want to see a really good band, I'm going to go to the Enoch Cree resort and entertainment centre because it's the best venue in Edmonton, and this parallels that as well. So the arguments for linkages and communities of interest are very good. Thanks.

**Mr. Sucha:** Not a problem.

**Mr. Clark:** I just want to go back to Calgary-Shaw specifically. In fact, the map is now a little bit scooted up. I just need to head south a little bit. One of the struggles we have, of course, is just the population growth and then getting logical lines but also not overpopulating or underpopulating, so we've tried to – I feel like we're that old spinning plate thing that you see in vaudeville.

One of the proposals earlier on was to use Stoney Trail in the north. We've got that bite there, which I think is Silverado and Chaparral, and basically kind of cut that off, give that to Calgary-Fish Creek. In your opinion, everything sort of west of the river there: is that kind of connected? Like, if we made that a little more square, rectilinear, would that make more sense?

**Mr. Sucha:** Yeah. From my perspective, looking at, like, boundary cut-offs and natural sort of draw points, I would probably draw from the river more than I would from the road, especially in that south part of Calgary. We often joke that I see people who live up at the university more than I see in McKenzie Towne because that Bow River really does segregate the city of Calgary and cut people off. So if, you know, you're trying to weigh different options, I would

suggest that you leverage that river more as sort of a natural boundary point than the Ring road itself.

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

**The Chair:** Well, thank you very much for your presentation.

**Mr. Sucha:** Not a problem.

**The Chair:** I wish we could spend an hour with each of the last three presentations, but we have to shut it off and we have to move on. I want to close today's public hearings – well, I want to make sure I have not missed anyone. Does anyone want to present that hasn't yet? No? Okay.

Well, thank you to everyone, especially those that are present, for your presentations. This concludes our time in Calgary. You've given us lots of food for thought, and we've got lots of thinking to do. We're going north.

Yes? Sorry.

**Ms Shantz:** Can I just make a comment? Really, just that last presentation.

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Ms Shantz:** I'm a volleyball referee. Tsuut'ina Nation has a very big sports complex, so they often host Volleyball Alberta events. There are club volleyball tournaments there. I don't know if they would for basketball as well. They've become a bit of a sportsplex hub, which wasn't mentioned, but I just thought I'd throw that out there. So, I mean, there are a lot of volleyball clubs in Calgary. Of course, there are through Alberta, but Edmonton and Calgary tend to have a very high number of them, and they're often there, so there is that relationship back and forth all the time with all sorts of areas of Calgary, not only the gas station and the Costco but also recreationwise.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

We close this chapter of our time in southern Alberta and move north as of tomorrow.

**Dr. Martin:** Thank you, all.

**The Chair:** Safe travels to everyone.

[The hearing adjourned at 12:12 p.m.]







