Denmer Wells

After the initial rounds of public feedback, I'd like to offer a revised map selection. Let's call this Denny's Neighborhood Cohesion map. I'd like to specifically offer it as a replacement for Denny's Map A, currently hosted as Map 9 on the reapportionment page. This map can be found at It can also be found at https://districtr.org/plan/107533 and an image of it is attached to this comment.

The message I heard at the public hearings, and through people who have reached out since, is that keeping neighborhoods together is a high priority for the community. I heard this at last Wednesday's meeting from Assembly Member Zalatel regarding Rogers Park. I heard this from residents who spoke at Thursday's meeting about keeping Hillside together. I heard this from Assembly Member Allard at Thursday's meeting regarding maps that paired Eagle River with distant communities along Hillside or Turnagain Arm. I heard this from Stuckagain Heights residents who reached out expressing a desire to stay connected with Anchorage districts. The public comments online also are generally critical of various Anchorage-Eagle River or Anchorage-JBER pairings.

I know that Alaskan's for Fair Redistricting has advocated an extremely low per-district deviation to achieve as much voter-parity as possible. But their map makes clear that holding rigidly to such a target results in a deep disregard for neighborhood integrity. In addition to their unusual boundary splitting neighborhoods across the north end of Russian Jack and Muldoon, their low deviation target drove a really unusual break through the middle of Bayshore, the carving off of a single block in the neighborhood around Vernon Street south of Dimond, a circuitous cut through Goldenview, drawing a line through the middle of the neighborhood south of Campbell Elementary, and they cut Airport Heights in half. I appreciate the precision with which they achieved a low deviation, but I believe their map demonstrates the unintended consequences of only focusing on one measure of equitable districts (low deviation) without considering other measures.

Some of the other maps were less concerned with deviation, but they also missed some neighborhood cohesion elements.

With my Neighborhood Cohesion map, I stayed with major roadways and waterways as boundaries as much as possible, as with my earlier proposal. I made the districts as compact as possible. Unlike the other maps which extend District 1 either north into JBER or south into Midtown, I paired the existing Downtown district with Turnagain and South Spenard, with the additional boundaries being Minnesota Blvd and International Airport Way.

The deviation in this map is 4.42% - higher than my previous maps, but still fairly low, and a reasonable compromise for neighborhood integrity. To put that in perspective, if we were to measure voting power of a member of each district as their proportional share of the votes on the municipal assembly, under this plan, a person residing in districts 2 or 5 has a vote share of 0.0041% of an assembly member's vote, and a person residing in districts 1, 3, 4, or 6 has a vote share of 0.0042% of an assembly member's vote.

As with the status quo district allocation, and mirroring our ~40% minority population in the municipality, there are 2 majority-minority districts in this map � districts 1 and

5.

This map also has a couple of possible revisions which could be considered, in case you want to further reduce deviation, or further enhance compactness.

Variation 1: Deviation Reduction. Swap Stuckagain Heights from District 5 to District 2, and swap the census track that encompasses the northern half of Russian Jack Park from District 1 to District 2. This reduces deviation to 3.22%. It retains 2 majority-minority districts. But it does impart significant road travel for the District 2 representatives to visit Stuckagain Heights. Swapping the census track that encompasses the Tikahtnu Commons retail complex from District 2 to District 5 further reduces deviation to 3.19%

Variation 2: Compactness Enhancement. Swap the area around Reka and East High with the area around Wesleyan between districts 4 and 5, making the new boundary a north-south line along the Pine Street corridor, bordered by parks on one side of the boundary through its entire course. You could also swap Far North Bicentenial Park from District 5 to either District 4 or District 6 � this would be entirely about the appearance of compactness, as there is no population there. Deviation is still 4.22%, but district 5 is now only 49.7% minority, so there is only one majority-minority district.

Variation 3: Combine Variation 1 and Variation 2. Deviation is now 3.19%. We again have 2 majority-minority districts, but just barely � district 5 is now 50.1% minority.
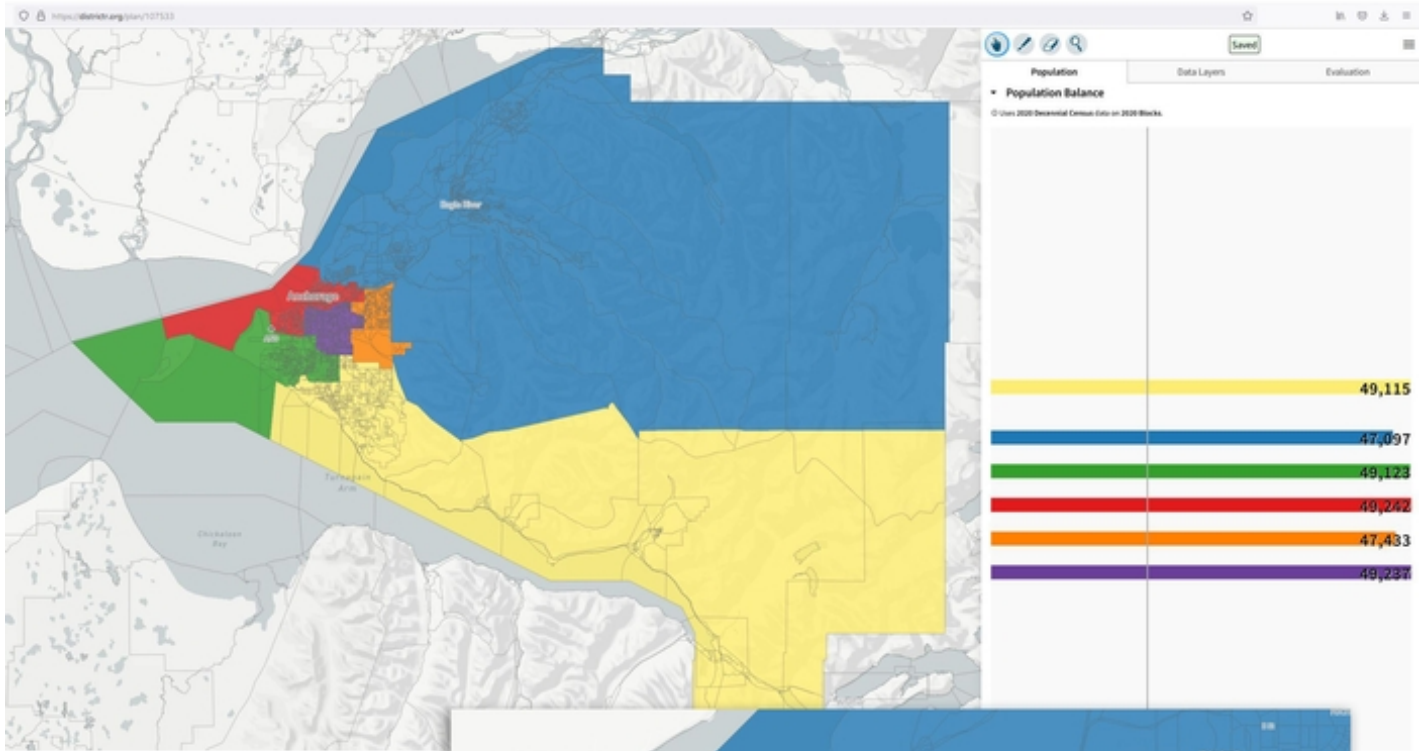
The only way to get a deviation lower than this is to combine Eagle River with some other significant population center � either combining Eagle River with a portion of Muldoon, or with a portion of Hillside, or with Girdwood and Indian. The public feedback we have heard to-date suggests those are not good pairings, especially due to the population advantage Eagle River would have in such a pairing The combined Eagle River-to-Eklutna population is approximately 36,000, yielding a nearly 3-to-one advantage over whatever other community you pair them with in a 48,541 person district. I attempted map drafts that paired the core of Eagle River � approximately 25,000 people � with parts of Anchorage, leaving Chugiak/Eklutna to pair with either Turnagain Arm communities or JBER and downtown. Those produce profoundly convoluted maps that are not compact and do not maintain neighborhood integrity.

Combining Eagle River with JBER, as I have done, the mathematical minimum possible deviation, with all 5 of the other districts exactly evenly split, is 3.57%. Consider that your baseline. 3.57% deviation is the price we pay to avoid pairing Eagle River with an arbitrary piece of an Anchorage neighborhood. The remaining 0.85% variation in my map is the price we pay to have a compact map that maintains neighborhood integrity as much as possible for the rest of the municipality, and which produces appropriate potential for minority representation.

As we have seen from the maps proposed so far, all of the options impart some compromise or imperfection. We could draft maps that minimize deviation, but then we lose compactness and neighborhood cohesion. We could draft maps that directly follow community council boundaries, but the deviation would exceed our 10% threshold. We could draft maps that are perfectly compact, but they may divide neighborhoods. Or we could draft a map like this that attempts to balance compactness, neighborhood cohesion, and population deviation.

I encourage the adoption of a map that is compact and maintains neighborhood integrity, like the one I have attached.

Denny's Neighborood Cohesion Map

District	Population	Target	Difference	%
1 - Mt View, Airport Heights, Downtown, Turnagain	49242	48541	701	1.44%
2 - Eagle River, Chugiak, JBER	47097	48541	-1444	-2.97%
3 - Sand Lake, Bayshore, Independence Park	49123	48541	582	1.20%
4 - U-Med, Rogers Park, Spenard, Dowling	49237	48541	696	1.43%
5 - Muldoon, Russian Jack, Stuckagain	47433	48541	-1108	-2.28%
6 - Oceanview, Abbot, Hillside, Girdwood	49115	48541	574	1.18%
			Total Deviation	4.42%