In 2021 the Fort Worth City Council is expanding by adding 2 new districts. **Elected representatives should not be allowed to choose their voters.** A group of independent citizens, after taking public input, should draw the most equitable council districts possible. There is a road map for an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission that has been used in statewide elections in Arizona, California and 4 other states passed this initiative this past November. In 2014 the City of Austin used this process for their City Council districts.

**Proposed Ballot Language**

The commission shall adopt a final plan for the City of FW specifically describing the district boundaries. The **City Council may not change the plan. The plan shall have the force and effect of law.**

**Why right now in Fort Worth?**

- All council districts are to be redrawn after the 2020 census with the addition of 2 new seats.
- Race and Culture Task Force recommended this process – let’s address those concerns and not ignore their work.
- This is a proven methodology that has had success across the country. We are not recreating the wheel.
- Total reconfiguration of the existing council districts when Fort Worth moves from 8 to 10 single member districts.
- In 2012 redistricting, “Incumbent Addresses” was one of the criteria considered. Politicians should not choose their voters.

**District Boundary Criteria. To avoid favoring any special group of candidates districts shall:**

- have reasonably equal population with other districts and be geographically contiguous and compact using existing election precincts and identifiable geographic boundaries.
- comply with the federal Voting Rights Act.
- respect the geographic integrity of any local neighborhood or local community of interest in a manner that minimizes their division. A community of interest is a contiguous population that shares common social and economic interests...
- **The place of residence of any incumbent or potential political candidate shall not be considered in the creation of a plan or any district.**

**Commission Selection - In order to create a truly independent commission without bias or a political agenda:**

City of FW Auditor shall initiate and widely publicize an application process in a manner that promotes a large, diverse (by race, ethnicity, gender, and geography) qualified Applicant Review Panel and Commissioner Applicant Pool.

- Applicant Review Panel shall be made up of 3 independent Auditors drawn from the application pool.
  - Panel shall ensure all applicants in Commissioner Applicant Pool fit commission member criteria.
  - Panel shall select a pool of 60 applicants from the qualified applicants.
  - City of FW Auditor shall draw by lottery 9 names – these 9 will serve on the commission.
  - These 9 commissioners shall choose 6 additional applicants from the remaining pool to ensure diversity reflective of FW and at least one member from each existing Council district
  - These 15 applicants shall make up the Citizens Redistricting Commission

**Commission Member Criteria - In order to avoid any real or implied conflict of interest each commission member:**

- be a voter continuously registered in the City of Fort Worth for the past 5 or more years.
- shall have voted in at least 3 of the last 5 City of FW general elections.
- be ineligible for 10 years to hold elective public office for the City of Fort Worth.
- be ineligible for 3 years to: 1) to hold appointive public office for the City of FW, 2) to serve as paid staff for or as a paid consultant to the City of FW, the City Council or any member of the City Council, 3) to receive a non-competitively bid contract with the City of FW.
- Within 5-years either applicant or their spouse shall not have: 1) Been appointed to, elected to, or have been a candidate for state or city office, 2) Served as an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a political party or of the campaign committee of a candidate for elective state, county or city office, 3) Been a registered state or local lobbyist 4) Contributed or bundled $1,000 or more in aggregate to candidates for City of FW elective office in the last city election
- Within 3 years not have been: 1) a paid employee of the City of FW, 2) person performing paid services under a professional or political contract to the City of FW, to the City Council, or to any member of the City Council, 3) any controlling person of any such consultant 4) or a spouse of any of the foregoing.
Activities and Approval - In order to effectively complete its goals with complete transparency and citizen input:
- Commission shall hire staff, legal counsel, and consultants as needed
- Commission shall establish and implement an open hearing process for public input
- Records of the commission and all data considered are public records
- Shall be at least 4 public hearings, geographically dispersed following the preliminary plan approval
- Public comment shall be taken for 14 days
- Commission shall vote on final plan and hold at least 2 public hearings, one north and one south
- Shall have 5 days for additional public comments
- Commission shall be done with hearings and adopt a final plan no later than November 1, 2021.