



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers  
City of Bonita Springs

**FROM:** Kurt Spitzer

**DATE:** January 7, 2022

**RE:** Redistricting Council Districts

The purpose of this Memorandum is to update the City Council on the status of our work to revise the Council districts based on 2020 Census data.

### **Redistricting Criteria**

Legislative districts (whether those of the Legislature, or a county or city) are required to be “as nearly equal in population” as practicable or possible. Redistricting is the process by which differences in the population of Council districts are equalized by adjusting district boundaries, and furthers the principle of “one person, one vote.”

The overall objective of a redistricting process should be to adjust the district boundaries so that district populations are roughly equal to one-another, the plans not dilute minority voting strength, and result in district shapes that are relatively compact and are easily understood by the electorate.

There are several criteria commonly used in the redistricting process. They are considered in total and balanced with each other; however, the dominant criterion is population.

1. Equal in population. A primary objective is to have the population of individual districts be as nearly equal to one another as is possible or practicable. “Population” refers to residents, not registered voters. “Nearly equal” means that the population of individual districts should be as close to the average (“ideal”) size as is possible.

Generally, a goal of having districts that are not more than three percent (3%) over or under the average or “ideal” district population is a good goal to pursue. Further, districting plans where the difference between the largest and smallest district is greater than 10 percentage

points (e.g. the largest district is 7% over the ideal and the smallest is 5% under) raises a “red flag” in the courts.

Within the confines of generally accepted redistricting criteria, accounting for future population growth over the next decennial period may be considered by the Council. In other words, one may decide to under-populate a district that is projected to be a high growth area over the next several years, based on sound demographic principles.

2. Avoid diluting minority voting strength. If there is a location where a significant number of minority residents reside, their ability to vote as a block should not be diluted by either dividing that population into two or more districts (termed “cracking”) or, if there is a significant minority population in two districts, moving that population into a single district (termed “packing”).
3. Use census blocks. Data from the US Bureau of the Census is updated every 10 years by surveying the population of the United States. Census data is presumed to be correct. The smallest unit within which that information is tabulated and made available are census “blocks.”
4. Compact and contiguous. Districts should be relatively compact and contiguous. Unusual, “bizarre” or serpentine district shapes that are created without furthering a valid underlying public policy purpose must be avoided. Contiguity may be achieved by crossing a waterbody.
5. Significant natural and man-made boundaries. District boundaries should follow easily recognized or understood boundaries, like major roads, waterbodies or parklands.
6. Recognize existing district boundaries. The boundaries of the updated districts may seek to retain their existing district’s boundaries to the extent possible.
7. Avoid splitting communities of interest. District boundaries should seek to avoid splitting communities that have similar interests (e.g., neighborhoods) where possible.

### **Census Data**

The Bureau of the Census counts the population of the United States every 10 years. Data from the Census is presumed to be correct. The 2020 Census reflects the population of the country on “census day” which was April 1, 2020. Census data is required to be released to the states one year after census day; however, the Bureau of the Census failed to meet that deadline in 2021, primarily due to the effects of the COVID pandemic, which had caused field operations to be shut down for more than two months in 2020.

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Thereafter, the Bureau had stated that the data would be released on or before September 30, 2021. However, “legacy” data was released on August 12, 2021. Legacy data is “final” data but required some reformatting of the electronic file base before it was usable in a redistricting process.

### **Existing Districts Map**

The first step in the redistricting process is to determine if there is a need to adjust district boundaries because of a significant imbalance between district populations. This is accomplished by “layering” or applying the 2020 data to the (current) district boundaries that were approved in 2011.

A copy of the Existing Districts Maps with 2020 data is attached, as is a table of statistical information for the existing district boundaries. Using the existing district boundaries and 2020 Census block data indicates that adjustments to district boundaries is necessary as the difference between the largest and smallest district is over 41 percentage points and well beyond the generally acceptable tolerance of 10 points.

### **Draft Example Alternative Map – Alternative 1**

Differences in population between one district and another are equalized by adjusting the boundaries of two or more districts, while following the generally accepted redistricting criteria described above.

A preliminary example of a possible approach (“Alternative 1”) to bringing population differences closer to acceptable tolerances in Bonita Springs is attached. Note that this example is still over the 10-percentage point threshold. However, with further adjustments, it could be brought into compliance.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with the City and look forward to speaking with you next week.

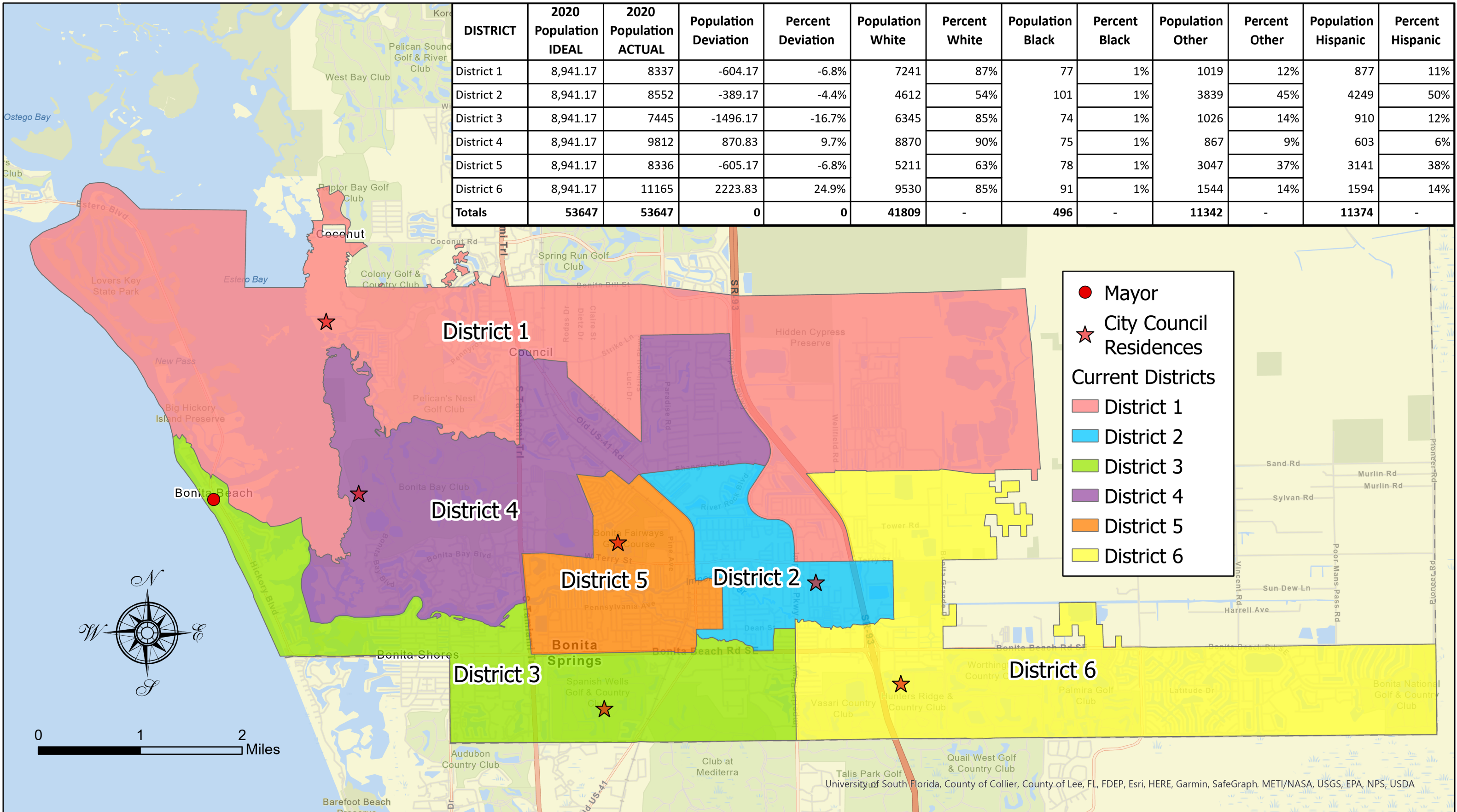
Attachments



# Current City Council Districts 2020 Redistricting Data



DISTRICT	2020 Population IDEAL	2020 Population ACTUAL	Population Deviation	Percent Deviation	Population White	Percent White	Population Black	Percent Black	Population Other	Percent Other	Population Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
District 1	8,941.17	8337	-604.17	-6.8%	7241	87%	77	1%	1019	12%	877	11%
District 2	8,941.17	8552	-389.17	-4.4%	4612	54%	101	1%	3839	45%	4249	50%
District 3	8,941.17	7445	-1496.17	-16.7%	6345	85%	74	1%	1026	14%	910	12%
District 4	8,941.17	9812	870.83	9.7%	8870	90%	75	1%	867	9%	603	6%
District 5	8,941.17	8336	-605.17	-6.8%	5211	63%	78	1%	3047	37%	3141	38%
District 6	8,941.17	11165	2223.83	24.9%	9530	85%	91	1%	1544	14%	1594	14%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53647</b>	<b>53647</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41809</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11342</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11374</b>	<b>-</b>



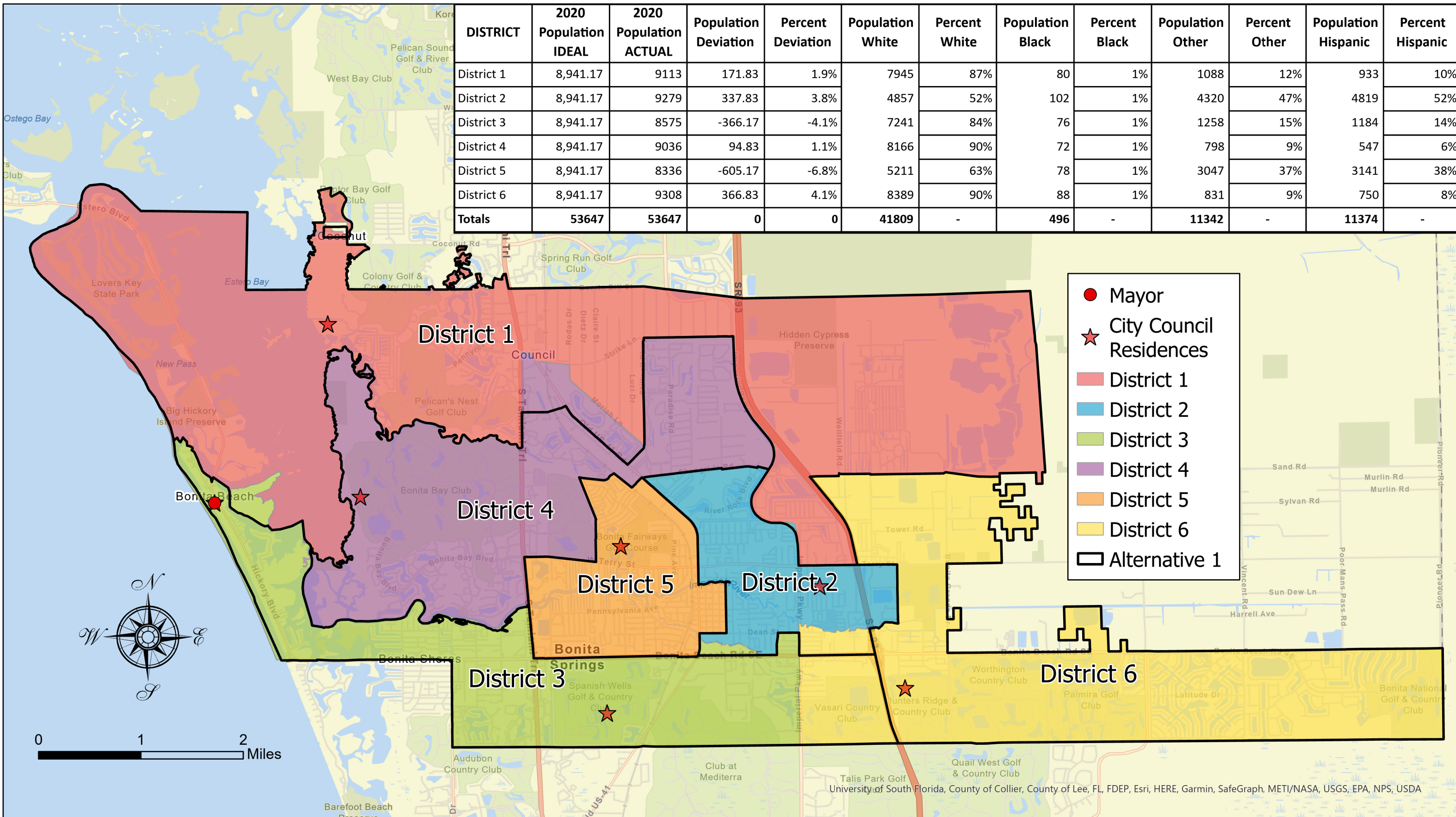
University of South Florida, County of Collier, County of Lee, FL, FDEP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA



# City Council Districts Draft Alternative 1



DISTRICT	2020 Population IDEAL	2020 Population ACTUAL	Population Deviation	Percent Deviation	Population White	Percent White	Population Black	Percent Black	Population Other	Percent Other	Population Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
District 1	8,941.17	9113	171.83	1.9%	7945	87%	80	1%	1088	12%	933	10%
District 2	8,941.17	9279	337.83	3.8%	4857	52%	102	1%	4320	47%	4819	52%
District 3	8,941.17	8575	-366.17	-4.1%	7241	84%	76	1%	1258	15%	1184	14%
District 4	8,941.17	9036	94.83	1.1%	8166	90%	72	1%	798	9%	547	6%
District 5	8,941.17	8336	-605.17	-6.8%	5211	63%	78	1%	3047	37%	3141	38%
District 6	8,941.17	9308	366.83	4.1%	8389	90%	88	1%	831	9%	750	8%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53647</b>	<b>53647</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41809</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11342</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11374</b>	<b>-</b>



University of South Florida, County of Collier, County of Lee, FL, FDEP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA

City of Bonita Springs

**District Statistics  
Council Redistricting Alternatives**

<b>Current Districts</b>												
DISTRICT	2020 Population IDEAL	2020 Population ACTUAL	Population Deviation	Percent Deviation	Population White	Percent White	Population Black	Percent Black	Population Other	Percent Other	Population Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
District 1	8,941	8,337	(604)	-6.76%	7,241	86.85%	77	0.92%	1,019	12.22%	877	10.52%
District 2	8,941	8,552	(389)	-4.35%	4,612	53.93%	101	1.18%	3,839	44.89%	4,249	49.68%
District 3	8,941	7,445	(1,496)	-16.73%	6,345	85.22%	74	0.99%	1,026	13.78%	910	12.22%
District 4	8,941	9,812	871	9.74%	8,870	90.40%	75	0.76%	867	8.84%	603	6.15%
District 5	8,941	8,336	(605)	-6.77%	5,211	62.51%	78	0.94%	3,047	36.55%	3,141	37.68%
District 6	8,941	11,165	2,224	24.87%	9,530	85.36%	91	0.82%	1,544	13.83%	1,594	14.28%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53,647</b>	<b>53,647</b>			<b>41,809</b>		<b>496</b>		<b>11,342</b>		<b>11,374</b>	

<b>Alternative 1</b>												
DISTRICT	2020 Population IDEAL	2020 Population ACTUAL	Population Deviation	Percent Deviation	Population White	Percent White	Population Black	Percent Black	Population Other	Percent Other	Population Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
District 1	8,941	9,113	172	1.92%	7,945	87.18%	80	0.88%	1,088	11.94%	933	10.24%
District 2	8,941	9,279	338	3.78%	4,857	52.34%	102	1.10%	4,320	46.56%	4,819	51.93%
District 3	8,941	8,575	(366)	-4.10%	7,241	84.44%	76	0.89%	1,258	14.67%	1,184	13.81%
District 4	8,941	9,036	95	1.06%	8,166	90.37%	72	0.80%	798	8.83%	547	6.05%
District 5	8,941	8,336	(605)	-6.77%	5,211	62.51%	78	0.94%	3,047	36.55%	3,141	37.68%
District 6	8,941	9,308	367	4.10%	8,389	90.13%	88	0.95%	831	8.93%	750	8.06%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53,647</b>	<b>53,647</b>			<b>41,809</b>		<b>496</b>		<b>11,342</b>		<b>11,374</b>	