

Comments on St. Paul Re-districting, Lexington-Hamline Community

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To: *CI-StPaul_CharterCommission <CharterCommission@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Cc: Jesse Hennem <jessehennum@mac.com>

**we will be attending today's public hearing at City Hall and attended the public hearing by phone at an earlier time*

March 16, 2022

To whom it may concern:

We are writing on behalf of the Lexington Hamline Community Council organization. We were established 50 years ago by dedicated neighbors who wanted to improve the quality of life and bring about positive community changes in the neighborhood. The primary work of our nonprofit is within our neighborhood's boundaries of Lexington to the east, Hamline to the west, University to the north, and Summit to the south. We have actively worked towards our mission through the involvement of neighborhood residents in community projects, programs, and direct action on issues that affect the neighborhood.

We are compelled to provide official public comments on the proposed ward boundaries (as of 3/16/22) because half of the options fragment our strong community and fail to follow the City's own standards for redistricting, passed by the City Council and Mayor in 2020, file number RES PH 20-223, as demonstrated below -

1. **Compactness.** Some of the proposed options (particularly options #1, #2, #3) are not compact geographically. They include far more planning district councils than any other wards. This will create many challenges and difficulties for any council office to be attentive to the neighborhood level issues with their time being divided by up to 7 district councils in some proposed options.
2. **Contiguity.** Some of the proposed options (particularly #1, #2, #3) lack clear northern boundaries and would not allow for easy travel throughout the Ward.
3. **Recognizable physical features.** Again, the northern boundaries in Ward 1 for options #1, #2, and #3 follow no easily identifiable arterial or commercial street.
4. **Communities of interest.** The LHCC's neighborhood will be fragmented with proposed options #1, #2, and #3. It will separate critical parts of the neighborhood and some of our relationships with stakeholders important to our community. Some options cut out Concordia University's largest campus building in half where it currently exists. It fails to preserve existing neighborhoods and even institutions we work with closely.
5. **Promote civic participation.** Proposal options #1, #2, and #3 cut out key community institutions that bring and unite the neighborhood: Concordia University, Dunning Field, Dunning Recreation Center, and Central High School. These are all key institutions and partners that the LHCC organizes with daily. LHCC also was a key partner in the City's planning of both Dunning Field and Dunning Recreation Center. Those options remove a key identifiable piece of LHCC's history.

We urge you to follow the City's redistricting principles and keep our community intact.

We favor proposed options #4, #5, and #6 as proposed as of 3/16/22 that keep the Lexington-Hamline neighborhood intact as a strong community with a legacy of working together to improve the quality of

our neighborhood and beyond.

Sincerely,

Jesse Hennum
Board President
Lexington-Hamline Community Council

Catherine Hinz
Executive Director
Lexington-Hamline Community Council

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