

A close-up photograph of a hand placing a yellow ballot into a dark blue ballot box. The word "BALLOT" is printed in large white letters on the top of the box. The box has a silver metal latch on the front. The background is dark and out of focus.

Part 10 – Proposed BC-STV Electoral
System Boundaries

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A. A Description of the Proposed BC-STV Electoral System

1. Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform

In April 2003, the Legislative Assembly unanimously agreed to establish the independent, Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, consisting of 161 members – one man and one woman randomly selected from each of the 79 electoral districts, two First Nations members and the Chair of the Citizens' Assembly.

The Citizens' Assembly identified three basic values that they believed should form the basis of our electoral system:

- *fair election results through proportionality*: the number of seats won by each political party in an election should reflect as closely as possible the number of votes each party received;
- *effective local representation*: each community needs the opportunity to choose the people who speak for it in the legislature, and to hold them accountable in democratic elections; and,
- *greater voter choice*: citizens should have the fullest possible opportunity to choose the candidates that best represent their interests, among party candidates and across all parties.

After studying a variety of electoral systems used around the world, conducting 50 public hearings across the province and considering over 1,600 written submissions, the Citizens' Assembly ultimately concluded that a single transferable vote (STV) system would best reflect these values, with several features unique to British Columbia, hence BC-STV.

2. Key elements of the proposed BC-STV electoral system

Under BC-STV, there would be fewer electoral districts in B.C. Each electoral district would elect between two and seven MLAs, and the number of MLAs might vary among districts. The Citizens' Assembly recommended that electoral districts should be designed to have as many MLAs as possible, because it is generally accepted that the more MLAs to be elected in a district, the greater the “proportionality” achieved – that is, the correspondence between the number of votes each political party receives and the number of seats won by each political party.

Each voter would get only one vote, but the voter would be able to express preferences for more than one candidate, by marking 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. beside candidates' names on the ballot, from most favourite to least favourite.

If the voter's most favourite candidate (#1) received more votes than needed to be elected, or

received the fewest votes and was eliminated, then some or all of that voter’s vote would be “transferred” to his or her next favourite candidate (#2). The vote, or part of it, would be transferred rather than wasted – hence the “single transferable vote” electoral system.

For a more detailed description of voting under the proposed BC-STV electoral system, see Appendix D of this report, and pages 17–20 of the *Technical Report* of the Citizens’ Assembly.⁶⁴ Elections BC will be responsible for designing and conducting a province-wide BC-STV election (based on a legislative framework that would be passed by the Legislative Assembly), if the new electoral system is adopted.

3. 2005 referendum on the proposed BC-STV electoral system

In May 2005, British Columbians voted in a referendum on the Citizens’ Assembly’s recommendations. To pass, two thresholds had to be met. First, in at least 60 percent of B.C.’s electoral districts (48 of 79), more than 50 percent of valid votes cast had to vote “yes” – that threshold was passed in 97.5 percent of electoral districts (77). Second, at least 60 percent of valid votes cast province-wide had to vote “yes” – that threshold was not met, as only 57.7 percent voted “yes.”

The September 12, 2005 throne speech addressed the consequences of the referendum results, stating in part:

One task that was never assigned to the Citizens’ Assembly was to show precisely how its proposed STV model might apply on an electoral map. This was arguably a design flaw in its terms of reference that in retrospect may have impacted how people voted in the referendum.

Your government believes that establishing STV constituency boundaries may provide the public with a critical piece of information that was missing at the time of the referendum. The govern-

ment will recommend that shortcoming be rectified. The legislature is obliged to appoint an electoral boundaries commission this session. Your government will use that opportunity to take the challenge of electoral reform to its ultimate conclusion. Legislation will be introduced to enable that requirement.

The new electoral boundaries commission will be given two tasks. First, to draft the provincial electoral map, as is currently required. The government will introduce an amendment that it hopes will protect northern representation in this legislature. The amendment will allow the commission to provide for up to 85 members under the current electoral system. Having decided on the most appropriate number of MLAs within that cap to protect northern residents, it will set its sights on STV. The commission will also be asked to identify the best and fairest way to configure British Columbia’s electoral districts under the STV model.

In view of the double difficulty of this assignment and a new census not expected to be completed until 2007, the time frame for the commission to complete its work will be extended from the time prescribed in the current legislation. The commission will be asked to submit its final report on electoral redistribution under both electoral systems by the spring of 2008.

That information will be put before the public as part of an extensive effort to better inform British Columbians about the two electoral options: the current system and STV. Equal funding will be provided to support active information campaigns for supporters and detractors of each model.

⁶⁴ Available at www.citizensassembly.bc.ca

4. The role of this Electoral Boundaries Commission

On October 24, 2005 the government accordingly tabled the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 2005* (see Appendix B), which gave this commission a second task in addition to its normal redistricting responsibilities – to make proposals to the Legislative Assembly based on the proposed BC-STV system, as to:

- the areas, boundaries and names of the electoral districts under BC-STV; and,
- the number of MLAs for each of those electoral districts.

Under section 4(5) of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act*, the commission is required to propose the same number of MLAs under the proposed BC-STV electoral system as under the current SMP electoral system.

During the October 31, 2005 debate in the Legislative Assembly, Attorney General Wally Oppal explained why our electoral boundaries commission was given this additional mandate:

The referendum results did indicate, however, that there was a widespread appetite in the province to examine electoral reform. During the debate, during the referendum, many voters felt that they did not fully understand the proposal. Members of the House will recall that there was a considerable amount of confusion during the course of the debate that took place prior to and during the election. As members of the House will recall, under the system, the electoral districts would change from single member to multi-member. Districts would have a minimum of two members and a maximum of seven. Generally, more rural areas of the province would have fewer members per district, while urban areas would have more. The average number of people per MLA would be constant.

Given the close result and the apparent wish of the people to have more information about the implications of the decision, the throne speech delivered in September set out a process for this debate to continue, to provide more information to the public and for the people of the province to have a final say in another referendum

The bill currently before the House is the first step in that process. The bill directs the electoral boundaries commission that will be appointed this fall to consider and recommend boundaries under both the current single member plurality system and a proposed STV system. This will ensure that during the next referendum British Columbia voters will know what their electoral districts would look like under BC-STV.⁶⁵

The second BC-STV referendum will be held in conjunction with the May 2009 provincial general election. The outcome of this second referendum will dictate which electoral system will apply to the 2013 general election.

The commission has no preference for or against BC-STV, and has no authority to invite submissions about whether BC-STV should be adopted. It has a limited mandate, to draw proposed BC-STV electoral boundaries, which will be used in the 2013 provincial general election if the May 2009 BC-STV referendum passes.

We are sensitive to the fact that one of the reasons why the Citizens' Assembly recommended the BC-STV electoral system was its impact on proportionality. The Citizens' Assembly stated, at p. 9 of its *Technical Report*, that: "Proportionality – ensuring that each party's share of seats in the legislature reflects its actual share of votes – is the basis of fair election results." This led the Citizens' Assembly to recommend a proportional electoral system with multi-member districts, in which each district should elect between two and seven MLAs. The number of MLAs could vary among electoral districts, with proportionality enhanced as the number of MLAs to be elected in a district (called the "district magnitude") increased. We have developed our proposed BC-STV boundaries with these principles in mind.

⁶⁵ The *Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act* was debated in the Legislative Assembly on October 31, 2005 (afternoon sitting) and on November 15, 2005 (morning sitting). The full text of the debate is available at: <http://www.leg.bc.ca/hansard/38th1st/H51018a.htm>.

5. To learn more about BC-STV

More information about the proposed BC-STV electoral system, and about electoral systems generally, is available from libraries and from the Internet, including these websites:

- www.gov.bc.ca/referendum_info – the provincial government’s Referendum Information website;
- www.citizensassembly.bc.ca – the Citizen’s Assembly website, for:
 - the Assembly’s *Final Report* and *Technical Report*;
 - the Assembly’s 14 “Fact Sheets;” and,
 - other learning resources – search for “STV resources,” then click on Learning Resources and Recommended Reading.

B. Combining SMP Electoral Districts to create BC-STV Electoral Districts

One of the unique challenges facing us was deciding the basis upon which to create BC-STV electoral districts. Should we develop our recommendations for SMP electoral districts first, and then aggregate them into workable BC-STV electoral districts? Or should we treat our SMP and BC-STV boundary setting tasks as two completely separate exercises?

During our public consultation process, we received some submissions in favour of both approaches. Some people felt that aggregating SMP districts would facilitate the public’s understanding of the BC-STV electoral system, while others said that developing BC-STV boundaries as a completely separate exercise might allow us to be more responsive to community and regional interests. Several electoral redistribution experts with whom we consulted⁶⁶ and seven alumni of the

Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform spoke in favour of the aggregation approach.

The *Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act* (see Appendix B) gives us no express direction as to which approach to take. Indeed, it gives us no guidance respecting what factors to take into consideration when drawing BC-STV boundaries and proposing the number of members for a BC-STV electoral district. Section 4(4) of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act* does state that sections 11–15 of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act* apply in relation to our BC-STV proposals, but none of those sections gives us any guidance as to what principles we should apply. However, we are bound by s. 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the authorities discussed in Part 4 of this report. We are satisfied that s. 9(1) of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act* is instructive to the application of these constitutional principles, particularly that “the principle of representation by population be achieved.” In other words, when developing BC-STV boundaries, we should strive for parity while being sensitive to BC’s geographical regions, the distribution of its population, important historical considerations and community interests.

After careful consideration, we have decided to combine our proposed SMP electoral districts into workable BC-STV electoral districts. As the earlier parts of this report reflect, we have spent a great deal of time and effort grouping SMP electoral districts into historically recognized regional groupings, and developing SMP electoral districts that reflect, as much as circumstances permit, community and regional interests. In our view, it is logical to rely on these regional groupings, when developing BC-STV electoral districts. If our proposed SMP electoral districts reflect important geographical, demographic, historical and community interests, then grouping them for

⁶⁶ Prof. John Courtney (professor emeritus at the University of Saskatchewan’s Department of Political Studies), Dr. Lisa Handley (an electoral boundary delimitation consultant from Washington, D.C.) and Prof. Kenneth Carty (acting head of UBC’s political science department).

BC-STV districts should also reflect those values.

We are also keenly aware that, if the 2009 BC-STV referendum passes, BC will be embarking on a bold new electoral experiment in the 2013 general election. We should, in our view, proceed incrementally whenever possible.⁶⁷

If BC-STV comes into force for the 2013 general election, there will be a new electoral boundaries commission appointed within the following year. If it emerges that the BC-STV electoral districts used in that election have made it unduly difficult for MLAs to represent local and regional community interests effectively, that would be the time to adjust boundaries.

C. Reasons for our Proposed District Magnitudes

District magnitude means the number of MLAs to be elected in, or representatives of, a BC-STV electoral district. The *Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act* instructs us to propose the number of MLAs for each BC-STV district, but does not expressly specify a range. Rather, it states that our proposals must be based on the “single transferable vote system,” which it defines as:

the electoral system recommended by the British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform in its final report, issued December 10, 2004, and in its technical report, issued December 20, 2004.

The Citizens’ Assembly recommended a magnitude range of

between two and seven MLAs per BC-STV district. From an examination of other STV jurisdictions (e.g. Ireland, Malta, Tasmania), members of the Citizens’ Assembly Alumni told us that:

- as the district magnitude increases, the proportionality of the results improves; and,
- it is generally assumed that a district magnitude of four or five achieves optimal proportionality – the proportionality benefits are minimal beyond a district magnitude of five.

In their *Technical Report* (p. 10), the Citizens’ Assembly acknowledged the need for varying district magnitudes:

MLAs are expected to represent their local communities. In British Columbia this can mean providing effective representation for citizens that live in relatively small, densely populated urban areas, or in large, thinly populated rural areas of the province. Those of us from the rural and more remote corners of the province understand the problems that long distances create for participating in public meetings or contacting an MLA.

BC-STV will adapt to different regional needs. Electoral districts in our new system will be organized to reduce these difficulties while ensuring proportionality. In the north and southeast this means adopting districts of two to three members. In the south-central and southwest of the province this means new districts of between four and seven members.

During our public consultation, some people told us that we should adopt a uniform district magnitude of two across the province, in order to keep BC-STV districts manageable. Others said that all BC-STV districts should have a district magnitude of seven, to achieve the greatest possible proportionality. Still others recommended ranges, such as three to five, or the full allotment of two to seven.

UBC political science professor Kenneth Carty examined, on

⁶⁷ We were told that political parties and elections officials organize their activities around SMP district boundaries, and would find it administratively simpler to convert to the BC-STV electoral system if SMP districts were grouped together.

our behalf, recent STV experience in Ireland.⁶⁸ He reported that Ireland has used STV in the lower house of its national parliament since 1923. In 1923, its 28 electoral districts had district magnitudes ranging from three to nine. In 1935, its 34 electoral districts had district magnitudes ranging from only three to seven. Since 1947, during which time the number of electoral districts has increased from 40 to 42, district magnitudes have narrowed even further, ranging only from three to five. Since 1997, legislation has mandated district magnitudes of only three, four or five members. Prof. Carty reported that:

There is no appetite for expanding the range of district magnitudes in use and experience suggests that creating constituencies returning from 3 to 5 members has provided for broadly proportional outcomes that satisfy parties and independents alike.⁶⁹

Based on what we have heard and read, we have reached several understandings, which have guided us in our BC-STV boundary setting task:

- proportionality improves as the district magnitude increases;
- significant proportionality is achieved with a district magnitude of four or five; although proportionality continues to increase after five, the benefits taper off at six and seven;
- in sparsely populated areas of the province, the desire for proportionality must be balanced against the need to create BC-STV districts that reflect local community and regional interests, and that are serviceable. We should avoid creating BC-STV districts with a district magnitude of two, except in exceptional circumstances;
- BC-STV boundaries should, to the extent possible, respect the province’s geographic and demographic regions,

and existing administrative units such as regional districts and municipalities; and,

- we should avoid district magnitudes of seven, for two reasons:
 - the benefits of proportionality taper off when the district magnitude exceeds five; and,
 - in fast-growing urban areas, we should avoid a district magnitude of seven so that future electoral boundaries commissions will have some leeway to adjust for population increases by increasing the district magnitude without having to redraw the boundaries.

⁶⁸ Carty, R.K., “Electoral Boundary Determination in Single Transferable Vote Electoral Systems: the case of Ireland and Scotland,” October 2006, available on the commission’s website: www.bc-ebc.ca.

⁶⁹ According to information provided by the Citizens’ Assembly Alumni, Malta has since 1947 used a district magnitude of six, while Tasmania has used district magnitudes of six (1948–1956), seven (1956–1996) and five (1998–2002).

D. Our Proposals for BC-STV Electoral Boundaries

As discussed earlier, we have decided to create BC-STV electoral districts by grouping our proposed SMP electoral districts. In this section, we propose that there be 20 BC-STV electoral districts.

1. The North

We have proposed that there be seven SMP electoral districts in the North. We are now proposing that they be grouped into three BC-STV electoral districts, as follows (see Tables 31, 32, and 33):

TABLE 31: NORTHEAST BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Peace River	20,052	41,157	-19%
Northland	254,700	23,881	-53%
District magnitude: 2	274,752	65,038	-36%

This area is geographically isolated from the rest of the North, and is sparsely populated. We are persuaded that it should constitute one two-member Northeast BC-STV electoral district. (see map page 333) It will have a deviation of minus 36 percent.

After considering the factors set out in section 9(1) of the legislation, we are satisfied that the vastness of the combined land mass of this STV district (29 percent of the provincial total), the sparsity of its population, and its extreme weather conditions constitute “very special circumstances,” which justify exceeding the statutory deviation limit of minus 25 percent. We are also sensitive to the fact that combining the Northland and Peace River SMP electoral districts with electoral districts to the west would not respect community interests.

TABLE 32: NORTHWEST BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
North Coast	149,977	23,135	-54.4%
Skeena-Stikine	149,292	38,199	-24.8%
District magnitude: 2	299,270	61,334	-39.6%

For similar reasons, we are proposing that the two SMP electoral districts of North Coast and Skeena-Stikine be grouped together to form one two-member Northwest BC-STV electoral district. It will have a deviation of minus 39.6 percent. (see map page 334) As discussed earlier in this report, North Coast is a very challenging area for an MLA to represent, with many constituents living on Haida Gwaii or in small coastal communities accessible only by water or air. Similarly, Skeena-Stikine, extending north nearly to the Yukon border, poses some representation challenges. Cumulatively these constitute, in our view, “very special circumstances,” justifying a deviation in excess of the statutory limit of minus 25 percent.

TABLE 33: NORTH CENTRAL BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Bulkley-Nechako	78,193	38,243	-24.7%
Prince George	49	50,893	+0.2%
Fraser-Fort George	51,832	41,371	-18.5%
District magnitude: 3	130,074	130,507	-14.3%

The remaining three proposed Northern SMP electoral districts constitute the central north of the province. The major transportation corridors of Highways 16 and 97 connect most residents of these districts to one another. They all share a community interest around the principal population center of Prince George. We are proposing that they be grouped together into one three-member North Central BC-STV electoral district. (see map page 335) It will have a deviation of minus 14.3 percent.

2. The Cariboo-Thompson

We have proposed that there be four SMP electoral districts in the Cariboo-Thompson. We are now proposing that they be grouped into one four-member BC-STV electoral district, to be named Cariboo-Thompson. (see map page 336)

TABLE 34: CARIBOO-THOMPSON BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Cariboo-Chilcotin	75,184	45,104	-11.2%
Cariboo-Fraser	35,477	42,170	-17%
Kamloops–South Thompson	3,854	51,812	+2%
Kamloops–North Thompson	21,694	50,042	-1.5%
District magnitude: 4	136,209	189,128	-6.9%

This land mass includes several sub-regions, such as the Cariboo, the Chilcotin, the Southern Interior and Thompson. It is defined by three major river systems – the Fraser, the North Thompson and the South Thompson. The communities in this region are connected by several of B.C.’s major highway systems. The Cariboo-Thompson has historically been treated as a discrete region of the province. It will have a deviation of minus 6.9 percent.

3. The Okanagan

We have proposed that there be seven SMP electoral districts in the Okanagan. We are now proposing that these seven districts be grouped into one four-member BC-STV electoral district (to be named Okanagan-Shuswap) (see map page 337), and one three-member BC-STV electoral district (to be named Okanagan-Boundary) (see map page 338). They would have deviations of plus 7 percent and minus 2.4 percent, respectively (see Tables 35 and 36).

TABLE 35 OKANAGAN-SHUSWAP BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Shuswap	8,626	53,658	+5.7%
Vernon-Monashee	5,016	58,538	+15.3%
Kelowna–Lake Country	1,181	51,968	+2.3%
Kelowna-Mission	564	53,231	+4.8%
District magnitude: 4	15,386	217,395	+7.0%

TABLE 36: OKANAGAN-BOUNDARY BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Kelowna-Westside	1,140	51,850	+2.1%
Penticton	1,919	53,777	+5.9%
Boundary-Similkameen	15,954	43,052	-15.2%
District magnitude: 3	19,013	148,679	-2.4%

The Okanagan region (as we have defined and amended it) is a part of the province with a primarily urban (with some rural) population that shares many community interests. We considered whether to propose one seven-member BC-STV electoral district (the maximum allowed), or two districts with smaller district magnitudes.

The principal disadvantage of a seven-member BC-STV district is that it allows no room for future growth, without changing boundaries. In a geographical area where significant population growth is anticipated, creating two BC-STV electoral districts with smaller district magnitudes will allow a future electoral boundaries commission to increase the district magnitudes, without having to redraw BC-STV boundaries. Although we realize that creating an Okanagan BC-STV electoral district with a district magnitude of three results in reduced proportionality, we believe it preferable to create two BC-STV electoral districts in the Okanagan.

Creating two BC-STV electoral districts in this area also means that the City of Kelowna, being so large and centrally located, must be divided between them – the only alternative would have been to create districts with district magnitudes of five and two. It has also resulted in the two districts having somewhat disparate deviations: plus 7 percent and minus 2.4 percent. Having decided to group SMP districts together to form BC-STV districts, and given the primarily linear distribution of districts throughout the Okanagan, this was unavoidable. We expect these deviations to moderate, since the southern Okanagan is expected to experience higher growth.

4. The Columbia-Kootenay

We have proposed that there be three SMP electoral districts in the Columbia-Kootenay region. We are now proposing that they be grouped into one three-member BC-STV electoral district, which we propose be named Columbia-Kootenay (see map page 339). It will have a deviation of minus 4.9 percent (see Table 37).

TABLE 37: COLUMBIA-KOOTENAY BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Kootenay East	50,419	39,951	-21.3%
Kootenay South	13,870	50,851	+0.1%
Kootenay West	11,843	54,025	+6.4%
District magnitude: 3	76,132	144,827	-4.9%

This area, with its rich mining and smelting history, is defined by several major river and lake systems, including the Columbia River and the Kootenay and Arrow Lakes.

5. The Fraser Valley

We have proposed that there be nine SMP electoral districts in the Fraser Valley. We are now proposing that these nine districts be grouped into one four-member BC-STV electoral district to be named Fraser Valley East, (see map page 340)

and one five-member BC-STV electoral district to be named Fraser Valley West (see map page 341). They would have deviations of plus 0.4 percent and plus 0.7 percent, respectively (see Tables 38 and 39).

TABLE 38: FRASER VALLEY EAST BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Mission-Clayburn	638	52,874	+4.1%
Abbotsford Centre	49	52,495	+3.4%
Abbotsford-Chilliwack	281	49,863	-1.8%
Chilliwack-Hope	10,842	48,807	-3.9%
District magnitude: 4	11,810	204,039	+0.4%

TABLE 39: FRASER VALLEY WEST BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	1,946	50,474	-0.6%
Maple Ridge-Mission	389	50,193	-1.2%
Langley West	73	53,231	+4.8%
Langley East	211	50,805	0%
Abbotsford-Aldergrove	193	50,965	+0.4%
District magnitude: 5	2,812	255,668	+0.7%

In considering how to cluster these nine SMP electoral districts into two BC-STV electoral districts, we could not use the Fraser River as the dividing line, because two of our proposed SMP districts straddle the river. It also became apparent that, however the SMP districts are grouped, the residents of at least two municipalities will be split between BC-STV districts. Accepting that unfortunate reality, we settled on a Fraser Valley East and a Fraser Valley West clustering that respects, as much as the circumstances allow, long-standing community interests.

With respect to our proposed Fraser Valley West BC-STV electoral district, we recognize that at present there is no bridge connection between the two SMP districts north of the river and the three SMP districts south of the river. However, our proposed BC-STV electoral districts would not take effect until 2013 at the earliest. By then, the Golden Ears Bridge joining Maple Ridge and Langley will have been in operation for several years, strengthening the ties among these five SMP electoral districts.

6. Tri-Cities

We have proposed that there be four SMP electoral districts in the Tri-Cities area. We are now proposing that these four districts be grouped into one four-member BC-STV electoral district, to be named Tri-Cities (see map page 342). It would have a deviation of minus 2.9 percent.

TABLE 40: TRI-CITIES BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP Districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Port Moody–Coquitlam	83	51,539	+1.5%
Coquitlam–Maillardville	30	46,315	-8.8%
Coquitlam–Burke Mountain	615	46,732	-8.0%
Port Coquitlam	35	52,692	+3.8%
District magnitude: 4	763	197,278	-2.9%

Bounded on three sides by water, the Tri-Cities area has become, in recent years, a distinct area within the Lower Mainland. With four SMP electoral districts, we are satisfied that this region should constitute one BC-STV electoral district. We considered, but ultimately rejected, the idea of adding Maple Ridge–Pitt Meadows or one of the Burnaby SMP electoral districts to increase the district magnitude of the Tri-Cities BC-STV district to five. In either case, doing so would ignore long-standing community interests and would clash with our goal of respecting municipal boundaries whenever possible.

7. Surrey

We have proposed that there be eight SMP electoral districts in the Surrey and White Rock area. We are now proposing that these eight districts be grouped into two four-member BC-STV electoral districts, to be named Surrey North (see map page 343) and Surrey South. (see map page 344) They would have deviations of plus 1.5 percent and plus 2.3 percent respectively (see Tables 41 and 42).

TABLE 41: SURREY NORTH BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Surrey–Whalley	31	51,283	+1%
Surrey–Guildford	57	51,801	+2%
Surrey–Green Timbers	16	51,142	+0.7%
Surrey–Fleetwood	25	51,985	+2.4%
District magnitude: 4	129	206,211	+1.5%

TABLE 42: SURREY SOUTH BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Surrey–Newton	14	53,711	+5.8%
Surrey–Panorama	62	52,060	+2.5%
Surrey–Cloverdale	121	50,875	+0.2%
Surrey–White Rock	62	51,128	+0.7%
District magnitude: 4	259	207,774	+2.3%

Our clustering on a northern and southern basis was done primarily to respect the City of Surrey’s seven communities. Our proposed Surrey North BC-STV electoral district corresponds quite closely to the city’s Whalley, City Centre, Guildford and Fleetwood communities. Our proposed Surrey South BC-STV electoral district corresponds quite closely to the city’s more agricultural Newton, Cloverdale and South Surrey communities, plus the separate municipality of White Rock.

8. Richmond and Delta

We have proposed that there be five SMP electoral districts in the Richmond and Delta area. We are now proposing that these five districts be grouped into one five-member BC-STV electoral district, to be named Richmond-Delta. (see map page 345) It would have a deviation of plus 7.1 percent (see Table 43).

TABLE 43: RICHMOND-DELTA BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Richmond Centre	374	55,942	+10.2%
Richmond East	92	57,798	+13.8%
Richmond-Steveston	32	60,721	+19.6%
Delta North	32	51,628	+1.7%
Delta South	463	45,774	-9.9%
District magnitude: 5	991	271,863	+7.1%

We considered proposing a three-member Richmond BC-STV district and a two-member Delta BC-STV district, but declined to do so because of the Citizens' Assembly's caution that two-member districts should be limited to sparsely-populated areas of the province. We also considered grouping the two Delta SMP electoral districts with those in Surrey, and grouping the three Richmond SMP electoral districts with those in Vancouver, but decided that doing either would disrupt long-standing community interests. On balance, it would be preferable to group the five Richmond and Delta SMP electoral districts into one BC-STV district.

9. Burnaby and New Westminster

We have proposed that there be four SMP electoral districts in Burnaby and one in New Westminster. We are now proposing that these five districts be grouped into one five-member BC-STV electoral district, to be named Burnaby–New Westminster.(see map page 346) It would have a deviation of plus 2.9 percent (see Table 44).

TABLE 44: BURNABY–NEW WESTMINSTER BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Burnaby-Brentwood	24	51,274	+1%
Burnaby-Lougheed	37	50,229	-1.1%
Burnaby-Willingdon	13	50,957	+0.3%
Burnaby-Edmonds	23	50,339	-0.9%
New Westminster	18	58,549	+15.3%
District magnitude: 5	115	261,348	+2.9%

New Westminster has stronger community interests with Burnaby than with other adjacent municipalities. Consequently, we believe that New Westminster should be joined with the four proposed Burnaby SMP electoral districts, to form one five-member BC-STV electoral district.

10. Vancouver

We have proposed that there be 11 SMP electoral districts in Vancouver. We are now proposing that these 11 districts be grouped into one five-member BC-STV electoral district to be named Vancouver East (see map page 347), and one six-member BC-STV electoral district to be named Vancouver West. (see map page 348) They would have deviations of plus 9.3 percent and plus 2.6 percent respectively (see Tables 45 and 46).

TABLE 45: VANCOUVER EAST BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Vancouver-Hastings	14	55,595	+9.5%
Vancouver-Kingsway	9	57,185	+12.6%
Vancouver-Fraserview	13	57,276	+12.8%
Vancouver–Mount Pleasant	13	52,628	+3.6%
Vancouver-Kensington	9	54,967	+8.2%
District magnitude: 5	58	277,651	+9.3%

TABLE 46: VANCOUVER WEST BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Vancouver–West End	12	48,725	-4.1%
Vancouver–False Creek	6	43,568	-14.2%
Vancouver–Fairview	9	52,020	+2.4%
Vancouver–Langara	15	57,047	+12.3%
Vancouver–Point Grey	44	54,823	+8%
Vancouver–Quilchena	22	56,409	+11.1%
District magnitude: 6	109	312,592	+2.6%

Main Street has traditionally been seen as an unofficial dividing line between the east side and west side of Vancouver. Since we have relied on Main Street as a principal boundary between several SMP electoral districts, it seemed appropriate to us to create one BC-STV electoral district east of Main Street, and the other to the west.

Although the deviations between the two proposed districts are somewhat disparate (plus 9.3 percent and plus 2.6 percent), that is to some extent inevitable when SMP districts are combined to form BC-STV districts. In any event, greater than average growth is expected on the west side of the city, so we expect this disparity to moderate or be eliminated over time.

11. North Shore

We have proposed that there be four SMP electoral districts in the North Shore. We are now proposing that they be grouped into one four-member BC-STV electoral district, to be named North Shore. (see map page 349) It would have a deviation of plus 3.5 percent (see Table 47).

TABLE 47: NORTH SHORE BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
North Vancouver–Seymour	395	52,164	+2.7%
North Vancouver–Lonsdale	27	54,600	+7.5%
West Vancouver–Capilano	80	54,238	+6.8%
West Vancouver–Sea to Sky	9,613	49,161	-3.2%
District magnitude: 4	10,115	210,163	+3.5%

12. Vancouver Island and South Coast

We have proposed that there be 13 SMP electoral districts on Vancouver Island. As discussed earlier in this report, we are also proposing that the Powell River–Sunshine Coast SMP electoral district be grouped with northern Vancouver Island SMP districts, to form a North Island–South Coast BC-STV electoral district. (see map page 350) We are now proposing that the resulting 14 SMP electoral districts be grouped into three BC-STV electoral districts, as follows (see Tables 48 to 50):

TABLE 48: NORTH ISLAND–SOUTH COAST BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
North Island	44,502	53,654	+5.7%
Comox Valley	1,707	55,543	+9.4%
Powell River–Sunshine Coast	21,232	47,109	-7.2%
Central Island	13,903	46,214	-9%
District magnitude: 4	81,344	202,520	-0.3%

During our public consultation, several Powell River–Sunshine Coast constituents told us that they were opposed to being included in a North Shore–South Coast BC-STV electoral district. We were told that this is predominantly a coastal and rural area, having more in common with northern Vancouver Island than with the North Shore.

We believe that the Powell River–Sunshine Coast SMP electoral district should be combined with the northern Vancouver Island SMP districts to form one four-member BC-STV electoral district, for several reasons. First, the submissions of stronger community interests with the Island than with the North Shore are persuasive. Second, there is precedent for combining Mainland and Island communities into single governance entities – both the Mount Waddington and Comox-Strathcona regional districts do so.

The North Island–South Coast BC-STV electoral district is a principally rural area, nearly eight times as large as the other two proposed Island BC-STV districts combined. It will be a four-member district, with a deviation of minus 0.3 percent.

TABLE 49: MID-ISLAND BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Parksville-Qualicum	1,070	53,318	+5%
Nanaimo	627	53,940	+6.2%
Nanaimo–North Cowichan	2,528	52,695	+3.8%
Cowichan-Goldstream	1,731	54,946	+8.2%
District magnitude: 4	5,955	214,899	+5.8%

The Mid-Island BC-STV electoral district, (see map page 351) stretching from Qualicum to just south of the Malahat, will have significantly greater population density than areas farther north. It will be a four-member district, with a deviation of plus 5.8 percent.

TABLE 50: CAPITAL REGION BC-STV ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Proposed SMP districts	Area in sq. km.	Population	Deviation
Victoria–Oak Bay	290	57,571	+13.4%
Victoria-Esquimalt	99	57,133	+12.5%
Saanich West	93	56,548	+11.4%
Saanich East	91	51,880	+2.2%
Saanich North and the Islands	1,526	55,201	+8.7%
Juan de Fuca	2,646	56,240	+10.7%
District magnitude: 6	4,745	334,573	+9.8%

The Capital Region BC-STV electoral district (see map page 352) will correspond quite closely to the Capital Regional District boundary. It will be a six-member district, with a deviation of plus 9.8 percent.