

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 10, 2002

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER
IGNACIO B. PESSOA, CITY ATTORNEY *PS IBA*

SUBJECT: SELECTION OF PREFERRED SCHOOL BOARD REDISTRICTING OPTION

ISSUE: City Council selection of a preferred school board redistricting option, and adoption of an implementing ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) receive this report on Tuesday, May 14, 2002;
- (2) schedule a public hearing on the report for Tuesday, May 28, 2002;
- (3) at the conclusion of the public hearing, select a preferred school board redistricting option and request the city attorney to prepare the necessary implementing ordinance;
- (4) introduce the ordinance on Tuesday, June 11, 2002;
- (5) schedule the public hearing on the ordinance for Saturday, June 15, 2002; and
- (6) adopt the ordinance on Tuesday, June 25, 2002.

BACKGROUND: The nine members of the City of Alexandria School Board are elected by the voters of the City. In 1993, when the City moved from an appointed to an elected board, the City was divided into three school board election districts, each of which elects three members to the board. The provisions of the City Code pertaining to the school board are found in Section 12-12-1, *et seq.*, of the City Code.

As a result of the increase in the City's population, and of the shift in population among the three districts, as reflected by the 2000 Census, the City will be required to "redistrict," or redraw the three school board election district boundaries prior to the May 2003 general election

for school board members.¹ As discussed below, some members of the community have suggested that City Council take this opportunity to “restructure” the school board, by changing from a three-member-three-district structure to some other structure, *e.g.*, nine single member districts. Council is under a legal obligation to redistrict in time for the May 2003 election; there is no legal obligation to restructure the school board.

Under state law, responsibility for redistricting lies with City Council. Responsibility for conducting elections lies with the City’s three member Electoral Board, appointed by the judges of the Alexandria Circuit Court. On February 13, 2002, City Council held a joint work session with the school board and electoral board, to discuss election and redistricting issues and potential redistricting options. On March 12, 2002, City Council established a schedule for the redistricting process, and directed staff to distribute several proposed options to the community, and solicit public comment and input on these options. Because, as discussed below, the legal standards for drawing the district boundary lines can be met by several different schemes, members of the community were invited to suggest alternate approaches, which might otherwise comply with the legal standards and better serve the City.

The following general legal requirements govern the redistricting process:

First and foremost, the new districts must meet the “one-person-one-vote” standard required by the United States Constitution. In order to meet this standard, with the current three-district system, the total population of the City as shown by the 2000 Census, 128,283, is divided by three, to yield an ideal district size of 42,761. The actual district populations must fall within $\pm 5\%$ (or a total deviation of 10% between the largest and smallest districts) of this ideal population. Thus, for the three-district system in Alexandria, the population of the smallest district cannot differ from the population of the largest district by more than 4,276 people. For a nine-district system, the ideal district size is 14,253, and the maximum difference between districts is 1,425.

Second, under state law, election districts must be compact and contiguous. This means that districts must be a single geographic area which is reasonably regular in shape. Irregular shapes must be justified by reference to another redistricting factor which justifies the peculiarity, such as following a significant geographic division between areas.

Third, again as required by Virginia law, voting precincts cannot be split between school board election districts. The district lines or boundaries must follow the established precinct lines. Thus, the precincts serve as the “building blocks” from which the school board election districts are constructed. If the districts ultimately adopted by Council do not follow existing precinct lines, then the precincts must be changed to coincide with the districts. This, in turn, may require the selection of new or additional polling places.

¹ In June 2001 the City completed the first part of the redistricting process, and adopted new voting precincts and polling places throughout the City, to be used in all elections. The adoption of these new precincts resulted in a minor shift in the boundary between two school board election districts.

Fourth, state law requires that election districts follow clearly observable boundaries. Using the established precinct lines meets this requirement.

In addition to the foregoing requirements, election districts may be drawn so as to protect “communities of interest.” This is a broad term, which encompasses a wide variety of social, economic and cultural factors, housing patterns, in this case school attendance zones, and community values. Since redistricting is inherently a political process, protecting, or discouraging, incumbency is also a permitted consideration.

Virginia jurisdictions are subject to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Under Section 5 of the Act, the City will have to show that the new districts do not result in retrogression in the position of minority groups in effective electoral participation. In order to meet this test, the City must show that, as compared to the existing districts and 2000 Census data, the new districts do not impermissibly weaken minority voting strength.

The new districts must also comply with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Under this requirement, the new districts must not impermissibly result in minority voters having less opportunity than other members of the electorate to participate in the electoral process and elect representatives of their choice.

On March 15, 2002, information on the redistricting process, together with maps showing eight three-member-three-district options, was mailed to some 300 individuals, and civic and community groups throughout the City. Attachment 1. The information was also posted on the City’s web site. The mailing invited the public to comment on the options in writing, and informed the recipients that the City would sponsor an informational meeting, and accept spoken comments, on April 3, 2002. Approximately 50 people attended the informational meeting, and five persons made formal comments.

At the informational meeting, members of the public requested certain additional information for consideration in evaluating potential new district boundaries, and also requested that City staff prepare several nine-single-member district options, as well as some additional multi-member-district options. Both requests involved a restructuring of the existing school board electoral system.

That information, together with six additional school board election district restructuring options, was mailed to all the recipients of the initial letter on April 22, and posted on the web site. In addition, in order to give the public additional time to review and comment on this new material, the public comment period was extended from April 26, 2002, until May 7, 2002.

The additional information consisted of five items:

1. A map showing the attendance boundaries for the Alexandria public schools.
2. A map showing the number of enrolled public school students by voting precinct.

3. A map showing the school board election districts as originally established in 1994, together with a summary of the demographic data for each district.
4. A map showing the voter turn out by precinct in the May 2000 election for City Council and School Board.
5. A map showing the location of the residence of each incumbent School Board member, and a chart showing in which district the incumbent would reside under each of the redistricting options.

The new “restructuring” options were shown on six new maps. Four of these, Options 9, 10, 11 and 12, would establish nine, single-member districts. Unlike the three-member-three-district options, Options 1 through 8, each of these new options requires some changes in voting precincts, and the required precinct changes were shown, for each option, on an associated map.

The remaining two additional options would establish four multi-member districts, with a varying number of members representing each district. The districts vary in population so as to maintain the one-person-one-vote requirement overall. These multi-member-district options too require some changes in voting precincts, and the required precinct changes were shown, for each option, on an associated map. This April 22 mailing, including a corrected spreadsheet mailed on April 23, appears as Attachment 2.

The transcript of the informational meeting, including the public comments received at the meeting, appears as Attachment 3. At the close of the public comment period, 15 written comments have been received, and they are included as Attachment 4.²

DISCUSSION: From the comments received at the informational meeting and in writing, it is apparent that the community sees five overarching interests or concerns which should, assuming compliance with the technical legal requirements for new districts, inform the redistricting process:

1. Minority representation. Several commentators expressed the belief that the racial composition of the school board should more closely reflect that of the public schools’ student body. However desirable such a goal might be from a school governance perspective, the selection of the school board is an electoral process, and the constitutional parameters require and permit race to be considered, along with other traditional redistricting factors, only for the purpose of working toward a school board that reflects the racial composition of the electorate as a whole.

² Lois Kelso Hunt, on behalf of the Taylor Run Civic Association, submitted a voice mail statement on April 26, commenting that all students should attend school in the district where their parents vote, and that consequently the City should seek authority to adopt an at-large school board structure.

2. Community of interest. Several commentators emphasized the importance of maintaining as close a correlation as possible between the school attendance zones and school board district lines, so that parents vote for board members who represent the district in which their children's school is located. Katy Cannady, on behalf of the Alexandria League of Women Voters, wrote that "As nearly as possible, the three districts should be drawn so that parents are able to vote in the same district where their children attend elementary school. We believe parents are an especially important 'community of interest.'"

3. Student population by district. Implicit in several comments was the concept that student population by district, to the extent permitted by electoral considerations, should be approximately equal, in order to encourage an equal interest in school issues across the City.

4. Voter turnout. Several commentators also expressed the view that an effort should be made to minimize the disparity in voter turnout for school board elections between districts, so that, to the extent possible, successful board candidates would be equally representative of their districts.

5. Administrative considerations. The electoral board, and other commentators, expressed the strong desire that the existing number of precincts, and existing precinct lines, be maintained, in order to maximize the continuity of the existing election system with which voters have become familiar, and because of the difficulty of securing, and cost of staffing, additional polling places.

We address each of these considerations in the discussion of the 14 options which follows.

The first map included in Attachment 1, "**Current School Districts**," shows the existing school board election district boundaries. Within each district, and this is true for all the maps, a "pie chart" shows the demographic characteristics of the voting age population (18 years and older) within the district, and the numbers which appear beneath the district letter show the total population of the district, and the deviation from the ideal district population.

As is evident from this first map, District C is currently overpopulated by 8,570 people, or + 20% over the ideal size, and District B is currently underpopulated by 6,435, or -15%. District A is within tolerance, but the overall scheme fails the one-person-one-vote test. Current District A has a total minority voting age population ("VAP") of 40%, B of 27% and C of 54%. These figures establish the benchmark for Section 5 retrogression analysis. In terms of the community of interest identified in Item 2 above (hereafter "COI"), the current districts split five elementary school attendance zones:³ George Mason (north segment), Maury east of the rail line, John Adams, Patrick Henry and the southeast corner of Tucker. Student population in A totals

³ There are a total of 13 elementary school attendance zones in the public school system.

3,641, in B 4,408 and in C 2,973.⁴ In the 2000 council/school board election voter turnout in A averaged 26%, in B 32% and in C 15%.⁵

The information on the current district map suggests that the simplest “fix” is to shift population from District C to District B. The next map, **Option 1**, simply moves the James K. Polk School Precinct from District C to District B, and this one change is sufficient to bring the three districts within tolerance. Under Option 1, District A would have a total minority VAP of 40% (equal to the status quo), B of 40% (the status quo is 27%) and C of 55% (the status quo is 54%). In terms of COI, this option divides six school zones: Mason (north segment), Maury (east of the rail line), Lyles-Crouch (west of Telegraph Road), John Adams, Patrick Henry and Polk (west segment). A has 3,641 students, B 3,595 and C 3,786. Turnout in A was approximately 26%, in B 32% and in C 16%. No precinct changes are required. This plan received support from one commentator, Doris J. Cammack Spencer, on behalf of the Alexandria Virginia Chapter of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc., as the “most acceptable” alternative.

Option 2 moves the NOVA Arts Center Precinct from District B to C, and the Tucker School, James K. Polk School and Patrick Henry School Precincts from C to B. On the east side, the George Mason School Precinct moves from B to District A, in order to offset the increase in District B’s population. Under this option District A has a total minority VAP of 39% (current is 40%), B of 36% (current is 27%) and C of 54% (current is 54%). This option divides seven school zones: Barrett, George Mason, Tucker, Patrick Henry, John Adams, Lyles-Crouch (west of Telegraph) and Maury (east of rail line). Student population in A is 3,913, in B 3,610 and in C 3,499. Voter turnout in A is 28%, in B 28% and in C 15%. No precinct changes are required.

Option 3 makes two changes. On the west, the John Adams School Precinct moves from District C to B; on the east, the George Mason School Precinct moves from District B to District A. These changes result in District A with a total minority VAP of 39% (existing is 40%), B with 35% (current is 27%) and C with 53% (current is 54%). From a COI perspective, this option divides seven school zones: Barrett, Mason, Maury (east of railroad), Lyles-Crouch (west of Telegraph Road), Ramsey, Patrick Henry and Tucker. A has a student population of 3,913, B of 3,370 and C of 3,739. Voter turnout in A was 28%, in B 26% and in C 17%. No precinct changes are required. Barbara Lehr wrote in support of Option 3.

Option 4 also makes two changes: the same John Adams School Precinct move from C to B as in Option 3, but on the east the Agudas Achim Congregation Precinct moves from

⁴ Student population figures stated in this report are derived from the “Public School Students per Precinct” map in Attachment 2. Consequently, where a redistricting option splits an existing precinct, a general approximation has been made.

⁵ The voter turnout map included in Attachment 2 shows voter turnout by precinct for the 2000 council/school board election. Consequently, the voter turnout figures given in this report reflect an average turnout from the constituent precincts in each district.

District B to A. This results in a minority VAP of 40% in A (current is 40%), of 35% in B (current is 27%) and of 53% in C (current is 54%). Seven school zones are divided: Barrett, Maury (east of rail line), Mason (north segment), Lyles-Crouch (west of Telegraph), Ramsey, Patrick Henry and Tucker. Student population in A totals 3,803, in B 3,480 and in C 3,739. Voter turnout in A approximated 28%, B 26% and C 17%. No precinct changes are required.

The existing district lines, and Options 1 through 4, generally divide the City into districts in an east to west fashion. This division mirrors the historical pattern of the City's expansion over time. The next three Options, 5, 6 and 7, do not adhere to this pattern, and attempt to introduce a north-south district pattern. As a result, each shifts a large number of precincts from one district to another.

Option 5 results in District A with a minority VAP of 36% (versus 40% today), B with 39% (versus 27%) and C with 53% (versus 54%). Six COI or school zones are divided: Maury (east of rail line), Mt. Vernon, MacArthur, Ramsey, Patrick Henry and Tucker. Public school pupils in A total 3,814, in B 3,469 and in C 3,739. Voter turnout in A is projected at 27%, in B at 27% and in C at 17%. No precinct changes are required.

Option 6 produces District A with a minority VAP of 35% (current is 40%), B of 52% (current is 27%) and C of 41% (current is 54%). Five COI zones are divided: Jefferson-Houston, Maury (east of railroad), Lyles-Crouch, MacArthur and Patrick Henry. Pupils in A total 3,964, in B 3,056 and in C 4,002. The turnout figure in A approximates 30%, in B 17% and in C 27%. No precinct changes are required. Rebekah K. Hersch and John Carver wrote in support of this option. K. Keenoy expressed the opinion that this option lacked cohesiveness, whereas Owen Curtis expressed the opposite view.

Under **Option 7**, District A has minority VAP of 37% (versus 40% today), B of 48% (versus 27%) and C of 41% (versus 54%). Five COI zones are split: Lyles-Crouch, George Mason, MacArthur, Polk and Patrick Henry. Public school students in A equal 4,028, in B 3,857 and in C 3,137. Turnout in A amounts to 30%, in B 18% and in C 22%. No precinct changes are required. K. Keenoy expressed the opinion that this option lacked cohesiveness, and Owen Curtis expressed the opposite opinion.

Option 8 in effect combines the two approaches. On the east, District A remains unchanged, except for the inclusion of the George Mason School Precinct. Districts B and C are substantially reconfigured along a generally north-south division line. New District B is comprised of the Agudas Achim Congregation, Blessed Sacrament Church, Maury School, Second Presbyterian Church, Temple Beth El Synagogue, Tucker School, Beatley Library and South Port Apartments Precincts. New District C is comprised of the Minnie Howard School, Patrick Henry School, James K. Polk School, NOVA Arts Center, John Adams School and William Ramsay School Recreation Center Precincts. These changes result in District A with a minority VAP of 39% (current is 40%), B with 37% (current is 27%) and C with 52% (current is 54%). Six COI zones are affected: Barrett, Mason, Maury (east of railroad), Lyles-Crouch (west of Telegraph), MacArthur and Patrick Henry. District A has a public school student population

of 3,913, B of 3,138 and C of 3,971. Voter turnout in A approximates 28%, in B 27% and in C 18%. Again, no precinct changes are required. Rebekah K. Hersch, Carol Keller, John Carver, K. Keenoy, Margo Chisholm, Susan Johnson and Owen Curtis wrote in support of this option.

Options 9, 10, 11 and 12 would “restructure” the school board and establish nine, single-member districts. Unlike the three-member-three-district options, Options 1 through 8, discussed above, each of these additional options requires some changes in voting precincts, and the required precinct changes are shown, for each option, on an associated map. See Attachment 2. The Alexandria electoral board expressed concern for requiring precinct changes. Comments supporting consideration of a nine-district approach were received from Chet Avery, on behalf of the Alexandria Human Rights Commission, George Lambert, on behalf of the Alexandria Urban League, Howard Woodson, on behalf of the Alexandria NAACP, and by Jon Liss and Cameron Barron, on behalf of the Tenants’ and Workers’ Support Committee. Patricia A. Broussard also spoke in support of considering a nine-district system, and commented that the relevant “community of interest” should be the school system as a whole. Susan Johnson urged rejection of the nine-district concept as disruptive of established communities of interest. Owen Curtis urged rejection on the ground that nine single person districts would have an unduly divisive effect on the Alexandria community. John Carver also wrote in opposition to nine districts.

Option 9 results in the creation of two “majority-minority” districts⁶: A with a minority VAP of 50.78% and G with 64.49%. The Jefferson-Houston, Mt. Vernon, Barrett, Mason, MacArthur, Maury, Lyles-Crouch, Adams, Ramsey, Patrick Henry, Polk and Tucker attendance zones are split, a total of 12 COI zones. The per district pupil population ranges between 660 in District D, and 1,869 in District A. Voter turnout ranges between 14% in G and 35% in E. This option requires four precinct changes, including the selection of a new polling place for Beatley and an additional precinct carved from NOVA Arts Center.

Option 10 produces three “majority-minority” districts: A with a minority VAP of 60.78%, F with 61.18% and G with 60.15%. Eleven COI zones are divided: Cora Kelly, Mt. Vernon, George mason, Barrett, Jefferson-Houston, MacArthur, Polk, Patrick Henry, John Adams, Ramsey and Tucker. Student population ranges from 745 in D to 1530 in G. Turnout varies from 14.3% in G to 31.5% in B. Eight precinct changes, including the creation of two additional precincts, would be required to implement this option.

In Option 11 there are again three “majority-minority” districts: A with 60.78% minority VAP, F with 57.32% and G with 66.16%. A total of 12 COI zones are split: Jefferson-Houston, Mt. Vernon, Cora Kelly, Barrett, George Mason, Lyles-Crouch, MacArthur, Patrick Henry, Polk, Adams, Tucker and Ramsey. Again, the number of public school students per district swings widely between 745 in District D and 1773 in F. Turnout varies from a low of 14% in G to a

⁶ As used in this report, the term “majority-minority” district refers to a district with a minority VAP greater than 50%. It is important to note that Options 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 also have one “majority-minority” district which elects three board members, the most populous being District C under Option 1, which has a minority VAP of 55%.

high of 33% in C. Nine precinct changes are required, including the formation of two new precincts.

Three “majority-minority” districts are created under **Option 12**: A with a minority VAP equal to 50.78%, F with 60.86%, and G with 60.15%. Eleven COI zones are compromised: Jefferson-Houston, Mt. Vernon, Barrett, George Mason, Maury, MacArthur, Adams, Polk, Patrick Henry, Tucker and Ramsey. Pupils per district ranges from 590 in C to 1,869 in A; turnout from 14% in G to 32% in B. Three precinct changes, including one additional precinct, are required.

Options 13 and 14 establish four multi-member districts, with a varying number of members representing each district. The districts vary in population so as to maintain the one-person-one-vote requirement overall. These multi-member-district options too require some changes in voting precincts, and the required precinct changes are shown, for each option, on an associated map, included in Attachment 2.

Under **Option 13**, two single-member “majority-minority” districts are formed: A with a minority VAP of 60.78% and D with 66.16%. District B is represented by four board members; District C by three. Eleven COI zones are impacted: Jefferson-Houston, Mt. Vernon, Barrett, George Mason, MacArthur, Cora Kelly, John Adams, Ramsey, Patrick Henry, Polk and Tucker. The “pupil-per-board-member” ratio varies from 952-to-1 in District D to 1,433-to-1 in District C. Turnout varies from a high of 28% in B to a low of 14% in D. Seven precinct changes, including two new precincts, are specified. Allen Flanigan wrote in support of this option.

Finally, **Option 14** presents two single-member “majority-minority” districts identical to those in Option 13: A with a minority VAP of 60.78% and D with 66.16%. Districts B and C are in effect reversed: B is represented by three board members and C by four. Ten COI zones are breached: Cora Kelly, Mt. Vernon, Jefferson Houston, Barrett, George Mason, MacArthur, Polk, Patrick Henry, Tucker and Ramsey. The “pupil-per-board-member” ratio varies from 952-to-1 in District D to 1,347-to-1 in District A; projected voter turnout from 15% in D to 32% in B. Eight precinct changes are required, including two new precincts.

CONCLUSION: Three types of redistricting scenarios have been presented for review: (1) three-district/three-member scenarios (Options 1 through 8); (2) nine-district/single-member scenarios (Options 9 through 11); and (3) four-district/multi-member scenarios (Options 12 and 13). The second and third scenarios, in addition to accomplishing the required redistricting of school board districts, “restructure” the current district scheme (away from the current three district model) and increase the number of districts in which the minority VAP is over 50%.

Factors relevant to evaluating the three-district/three-member options are the following:

- they require no precinct changes or additions, and no new polling places;
- they split comparatively fewer (i.e., fewer in comparison with the other two types of scenarios) school attendance zones;
- they have comparatively smaller student population differentials among districts;

- they have comparatively smaller voter turnout differentials among districts;
- they create one three-member district in which minority VAP is over 50%;
- the three-district/three-member scenario has been in effect since the early 1990s, has been used in three school board elections (1994, 1997 and 2000), and thus has some familiarity with the voters, in particular, Options 1 through 4 which divide the City in an east-west direction.

Factors relevant to evaluating the nine-district/single-member options are the following:

- they each create two or three “majority-minority” districts;
- they require from four to nine changes to existing precincts, one or two new polling places, and one or two entirely new precincts;
- they split more school attendance zones when compared to the three-district/three-member scenario (11 or 12 compared to five to seven);
- they have higher student differentials among districts when compared to the three-district/three-member scenario;
- they have slightly higher voter turnout differentials among districts when compared to the three-district/three-member scenario; and
- the effect of even small fluctuations in total population, VAP and pupil population is inherently greater for smaller voting units.

Factors relevant to evaluating the four-district/multi-member options are the following:

- they each create two single-member “majority-minority” districts;
- they require seven or eight changes to existing precincts, two new polling places, and two entirely new precincts;
- they split more school attendance zones when compared to the three-district/three-member scenario (10 or 11 compared to five to seven);
- they have substantially higher student differentials among districts when compared to the three-district /three-member scenario;
- they have higher voter turnout differentials among districts when compared to the three-district/three-member scenario; and
- they give rise to a perceived (though not an actual) “voting power difference” in that voters in the single-member districts will likely believe that they have less voting power than voters in the other districts, since they are able to elect only one board member, while voters in other districts are able to elect three or four members.

We will be pleased to answer any questions as Council’s consideration of this matter proceeds.

FISCAL IMPACT: To be determined, depending on option selected.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: March 15, 2002, public information package

Attachment 2: April 22, 2002, public information package

Attachment 3: Transcript, April 3, 2002, informational meeting

Attachment 4: Written comments



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March 15, 2002

Re: Notice of Proposed School Board Redistricting
and Opportunity to Comment

Introduction

As you may be aware, the nine members of the City of Alexandria School Board are elected by the voters of the City. In 1993, when the City moved from an appointed to an elected board, the City was divided into three school board election districts, each of which elects three members to the board. The provisions of the City Code pertaining to the school board are found in Section 12-12-1, *et seq.*, of the City Code.

As a result of the increase in the City's population, and of the shift in population between the three districts, as reflected by the 2000 Census, the City will be required to redraw the school board election district boundaries prior to the May 2003 general election for school board members.¹ The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the process that will be used for this redistricting, and to invite you to participate in that process.

Under state law, responsibility for redistricting lies with the Alexandria City Council. Responsibility for conducting elections lies with the City's three member Electoral Board, appointed by the judges of the Alexandria Circuit Court. On February 13, 2002, City Council held a joint work session with the school board and electoral board, to discuss election and redistricting issues and potential redistricting options. On March 12, 2002, City Council established a schedule for the redistricting process, and directed staff to distribute several

¹ In June 2001 the City completed the first part of the redistricting process, and adopted new voting precincts and polling places throughout the City, to be used in all elections. The adoption of these new precincts resulted in a minor shift in the boundary between two school board election districts.

proposed options to the community, and solicit public comment and input on these options. Because, as discussed below, the legal standards for drawing the district boundary lines can be met by several different schemes, members of the community can propose in their comments alternate, three district/three member options, which otherwise comply with the legal standards and may better serve the City.

At the conclusion of the comment period, staff will prepare a report to council, analyzing all the options and summarizing the public comments. The City Council will then hold a public hearing on the report, and select the most favored option for adoption by ordinance to establish the new school board election districts.

General Legal Standards

In drawing new school board election district lines, the City Council will be guided by the following general legal requirements.

First and foremost, the new districts must meet the “one-man-one-vote” standard required by the United States Constitution. In order to meet this standard, the total population of the City as shown by the 2000 Census, 128,283, is divided by three, to yield an ideal district size of 42,761. The actual district populations must fall within $\pm 5\%$ (or a total deviation of 10% between the largest and smallest districts) of this ideal population. Thus, for a three district system in Alexandria, the population of the smallest district cannot differ from the population of the largest district by more than 4,276 people.

Second, under state law, election districts must be compact and contiguous. This means that districts must be a single geographic area which is reasonably regular in shape. Irregular shapes must be justified by reference to another redistricting factor which justifies the peculiarity, such as following a significant geographic division between areas.

Third, again as required by Virginia law, voting precincts cannot be split between school board election districts. The district lines or boundaries must follow the established precinct lines. Thus, the precincts serve as the “building blocks” from which the school board election districts are constructed.

Fourth, state law requires that election districts follow clearly observable boundaries. Using the established precinct lines meets this requirement.

In addition to the foregoing requirements, election districts may be drawn so as to protect “communities of interest.” This is a broad term, which encompasses a wide variety of social, economic and cultural factors, housing patterns, in this case school attendance zones, and community values. Since redistricting is inherently a political process, protecting, or discouraging, incumbency is also a permitted consideration.

Under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, the City will have to show that the new districts do not result in retrogression in the position of minority groups in effective electoral participation. In order to meet this test, the City must show that, as compared to the existing districts and 2000 Census data, the new districts do not impermissibly weaken minority voting strength.

The new districts must also comply with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Under this requirement, the new districts must not impermissibly result in minority voters having less opportunity than other members of the electorate to participate in the electoral process and elect representatives of their choice.

Potential Redistricting Options

Attached to this letter are nine maps of the City. The first map, "Current School Districts," shows the existing school board election district boundaries. Within each district, and this is true for all the maps, a "pie chart" shows the demographic characteristics of the voting age population (18 years and older) within the district, and the numbers which appear beneath the district letter show the size of the district, and the deviation from the ideal district population. Attached as an alternative to the "pie charts" is a table showing the demographic data for each option.

As is evident from this first map, District C is currently overpopulated by 8,570 people, or + 20% over the ideal size, and District B is currently underpopulated by 6,435, or -15%. District A is within tolerance, but the overall scheme fails the one-man-one-vote test. The remaining eight maps show potential redistricting options. These options were presented and discussed at the joint work session.

The information on the current district map suggests that the simplest "fix" is to shift population from District C to District B. The next map, Option 1 simply moves the James K. Polk School Precinct from District C to District B, and this one change is sufficient to bring the three districts within tolerance.

Option 2 moves the NOVA Arts Center Precinct from District B to C, and the Tucker School, James K. Polk School and Patrick Henry School Precincts from C to B. On the east side, the George Mason School Precinct moves from B to District A, in order to offset the increase in District B's population.

Option 3 makes two changes. On the west, the John Adams School Precinct moves from District C to B; on the east, the George Mason School Precinct moves from District B to District A.

Option 4 also makes two changes: the same John Adams School Precinct move from C to B as in Option 3, but on the east the Agudas Achim Congregation Precinct moves from District B

to A.

The existing district lines, and Options 1 through 4, generally divide the City into districts in an east to west fashion. This division mirrors the historical pattern of the City's expansion over time. The next three Options, 5, 6 and 7, do not adhere to this pattern, and attempt to introduce a north-south district pattern. As a result, each shifts a large number of precincts from one district to another.

Lastly, Option 8 in effect combines the two approaches. On the east, District A remains unchanged, except for the inclusion of the George Mason School Precinct. Districts B and C are substantially reconfigured along a generally north-south division line. New District B is comprised of the Agudas Achim Congregation, Blessed Sacrament Church, Maury School, Second Presbyterian Church, Temple Beth El Synagogue, Tucker School, Beatley Library and South Port Apartments Precincts. New District C is comprised of the Minnie Howard School, Patrick Henry School, James K. Polk School, NOVA Arts Center, John Adams School and William Ramsay School Recreation Center Precincts.

Please note that these are only options suggested for consideration. Neither the City Council, school board, electoral board or staff have recommended any plan over the others. In addition, community members are free to suggest other plans, subject to the general legal standards discussed above.

Availability of Information and Community Meeting

The information contained in this letter is also available on the City's web site, <http://ci.alexandria.va.us>. The web site includes color versions of the attached maps. In addition, large color versions of the maps can be examined at City Hall, in the City Clerk's Office on the second floor, and in all City libraries.

In addition, the City encourages you to include information about the proposed school board election redistricting in newsletters, brochures or e-mail distribution lists to members of your organization. To assist with further dissemination of this information, this letter is available in electronic format from Barbara Gordon, the City's Public Information Officer. A version in Spanish is also available. Please contact Ms. Gordon at 703-838-4300, or by e-mail at barbara.gordon@ci.alexandria.va.us.

The City will host a community meeting at 7:30 p.m., on Wednesday, April 3, 2002, at T.C. Williams High School, in the mini-auditorium. At that meeting, the maps and other information will be reviewed and discussed by staff. Attendees will be afforded the opportunity to make comments, and those comments will be transcribed and included in the report to City Council. The time for comments will be limited. If you would like to sign-up in advance for the comment period, if you would like additional information about this meeting, or if you have any special request for an accommodation, please contact Valerie Moore in the City Manager's

Office at 703-838-4300, or by e-mail at valerie.moore@ci.alexandria.va.us.

Opportunity for Written Comment

If you would like to comment to staff about the attached options, or propose a different option, before staff prepares a report and recommendation to City Council, you may do so in writing or by e-mail. All written comments should clearly reference the school board redistricting, and must be addressed to:

Ms. Joanna Frizzell, Law Clerk
Office of the City Attorney
City Hall
301 King Street, Suite 1300
Alexandria, VA 22314

E-mail comments should reference the school board redistricting in the subject line, and must be addressed to:

joanna.frizzell@ci.alexandria.va.us

If you are recommending in favor or against a particular option, please identify the option and your position clearly. It will be helpful to include a clear statement of the reasons for your position.

All comments must be received on or before Friday, April 26, 2002. Comments received after that date will not be considered by staff in formulating a recommendation and will not be included in the report to City Council.

Adoption Process and Critical Dates

After the community meeting and the close of the public comment period, City staff will review the comments, formulate a recommendation, and prepare a report for City Council. Council will then conduct a public hearing on the report, make its decision, and adopt an ordinance to establish the new school board election districts. After Council adopts the ordinance, the ordinance will be submitted to the Attorney General of the United States for review and preclearance under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. The ordinance will become effective after preclearance. The Alexandria Electoral Board will then notify all registered voters of their new district prior to the May 2003 general election.

The critical dates in this process are as follows:

April 3, 2002 Community Meeting

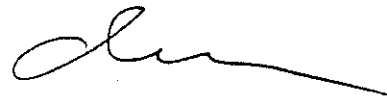
April 26, 2002	Public Comment Period Closes
May 14, 2002	Report Presented to City Council
May 28, 2002	City Council Public Hearing on Report and Selection of Preferred Option
June 11, 2002	Introduction of Ordinance
June 15, 2002	Public Hearing on Ordinance
June 25, 2002	Final Passage of Ordinance

These dates are subject to change by the City Council as necessary. Updated information about any changes will be posted on the City's Web site, or may be obtained by calling the City Clerk's Office at 703-838-4550.

Conclusion

Thank you for your continued interest in and support for the City of Alexandria. The active involvement of all members of the community adds immeasurably to the quality of public discourse and public decision making in our City.

Yours very truly,



Ignacio B. Pessoa
City Attorney

Attachments

Population Over 18 By Proposed District By Race

District	TOTAL	% TGT	TOTAL >18	WHITE	%	HISPANIC	%	BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN	%	ASIAN	%	OTHER	%
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PLAN ORIGINAL

A	40626	-4.99	34061	20203	59.31	5246	15.40	7199	21.14	827	2.43	586	1.72
B	36326	-15.05	30255	22050	72.88	2281	7.54	3718	12.29	1500	4.96	706	2.33
C	51331	20.04	42430	19329	45.56	6324	14.90	10668	25.14	3777	8.90	2332	5.50

PLAN 1

A	40626	-4.99	34061	20203	59.31	5246	15.40	7199	21.14	827	2.43	586	1.72
B	43568	1.89	35976	24846	69.06	3299	9.17	4964	13.80	1922	5.34	945	2.63
C	44089	3.11	36709	16533	45.04	5306	14.45	9422	25.67	3355	9.14	2093	5.70

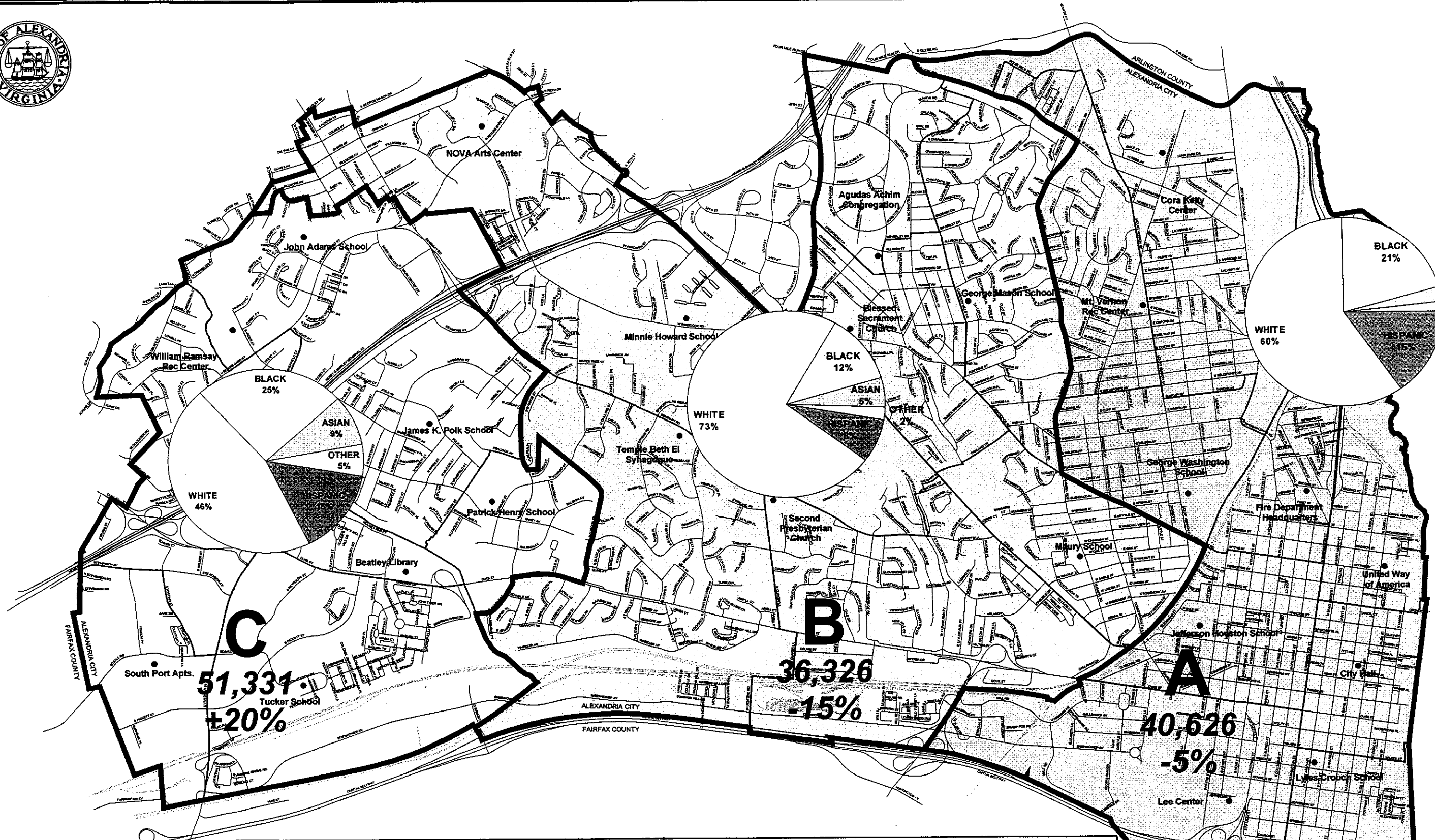
PLAN 2

A	43896	2.65	36583	22485	61.46	5308	14.51	7295	19.94	886	2.42	609	1.66
B	43684	2.16	36068	23292	64.58	3829	10.62	5734	15.90	2208	6.12	1005	2.79
C	40703	-4.81	34095	15805	46.36	4714	13.83	8556	25.09	3010	8.83	2010	5.90

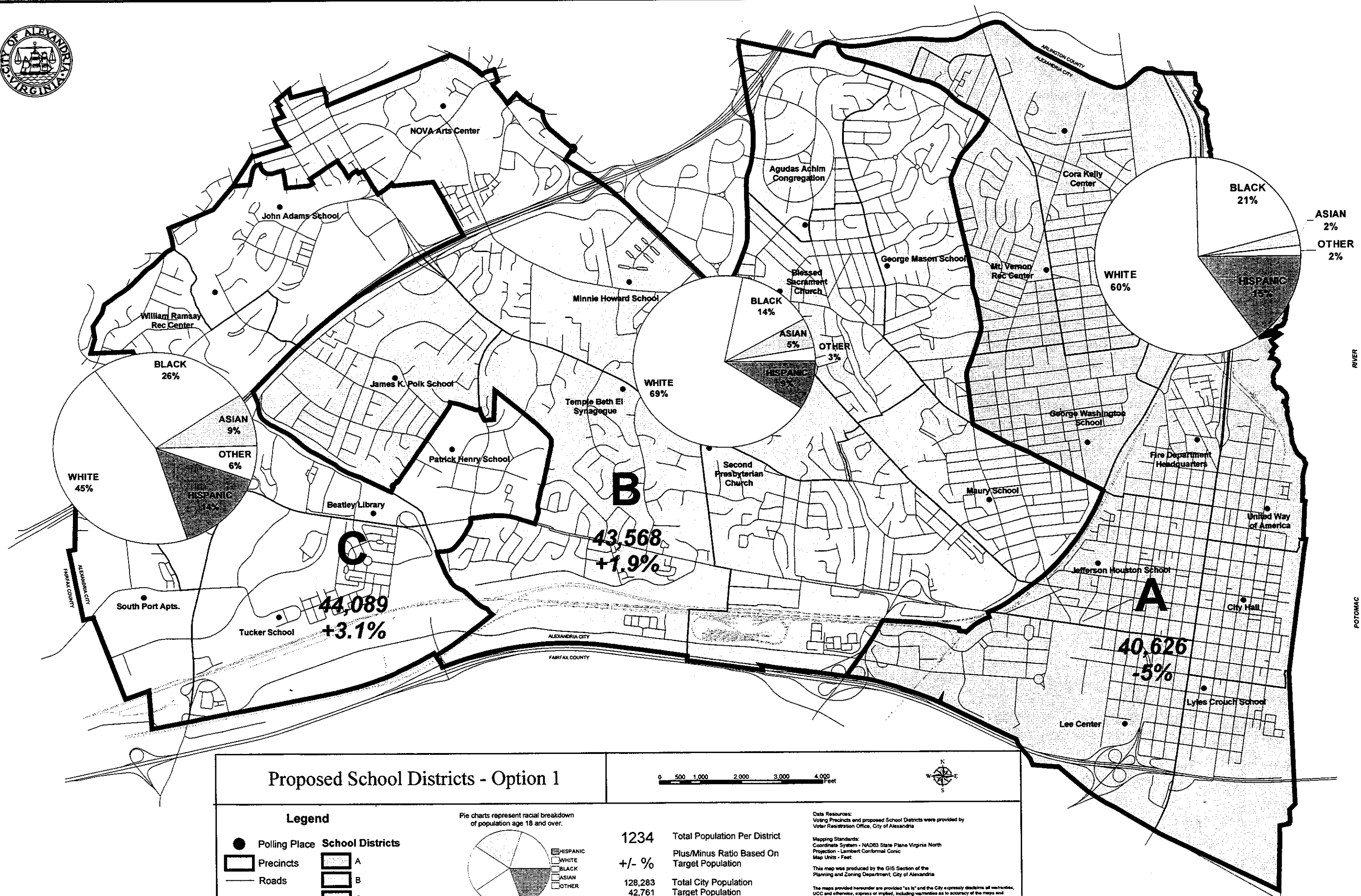
PLAN 3

A	43896	2.65	36583	22485	61.46	5308	14.51	7295	19.94	886	2.42	609	1.66
B	41791	-2.27	35006	22595	64.55	3281	9.37	5755	16.44	2088	5.96	1287	3.68
C	42596	-0.39	35157	16502	46.94	5262	14.97	8535	24.28	3130	8.90	1728	4.92

District	TOTAL	% TGT	TOTAL >18	WHITE	%	HISPANIC	%	BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN	%	ASIAN	%	OTHER	%
PLAN 4													
A	44152	3.25	37236	22772	61.16	5458	14.66	7435	19.97	938	2.52	633	1.70
B	41535	-2.87	34353	22308	64.94	3131	9.11	5615	16.35	2036	5.93	1263	3.68
C	42596	-0.39	35157	16502	46.94	5262	14.97	8535	24.28	3130	8.90	1728	4.92
PLAN 5													
A	42572	-0.44	35852	23167	64.62	3594	10.02	7390	20.61	1095	3.05	606	1.69
B	43115	0.83	35737	21913	61.32	4995	13.98	5660	15.84	1879	5.26	1290	3.61
C	42596	-0.39	35157	16502	46.94	5262	14.97	8535	24.28	3130	8.90	1728	4.92
PLAN 6													
A	42905	0.34	34984	22631	64.69	5209	14.89	5735	16.39	873	2.50	536	1.53
B	42789	0.07	35225	17208	48.85	5141	14.59	8300	23.56	2729	7.75	1847	5.24
C	42589	-0.40	36537	21743	59.51	3501	9.58	7550	20.66	2502	6.85	1241	3.40
PLAN 7													
A	43754	2.32	36072	22758	63.09	5344	14.81	6525	18.09	888	2.46	557	1.54
B	40738	-4.73	33222	16897	50.86	4762	14.33	7454	22.44	2442	7.35	1667	5.02
C	43791	2.41	37452	21927	58.55	3745	10.00	7606	20.31	2774	7.41	1400	3.74
PLAN 8													
A	43896	2.65	36583	22485	61.46	5308	14.51	7295	19.94	886	2.42	609	1.66
B	41598	-2.72	34938	21889	62.65	3402	9.74	5990	17.14	2489	7.12	1168	3.34
C	42789	0.07	35225	17208	48.85	5141	14.59	8300	23.56	2729	7.75	1847	5.24



Current School Districts		0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet	
Legend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Polling Place □ School Districts □ Precincts — Roads 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ A □ B □ C 	<p>Pie charts represent racial breakdown of population age 18 and over.</p> <p>(Percentages are approximate due to rounding.)</p>
<p>1234 +/- %</p> <p>128,283 42,761</p>		<p>Total Population Per District</p> <p>Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population</p> <p>Total City Population</p> <p>Target Population</p>	
<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Polling Place □ School Districts □ Precincts — Roads 		<p><small>Data Resources: Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria.</small></p> <p><small>Mapping Standards: Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic Map Units - Feet</small></p> <p><small>This map was produced by the GIS Section of the Planning and Zoning Department, City of Alexandria.</small></p> <p><small>The maps provided hereunder are provided "as is" and the City expressly disclaims all warranties, UCC and otherwise, express or implied, including warranties as to accuracy of the maps and merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, and further expressly disclaims responsibility for all incidental, consequential or special damages arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of the maps.</small></p>	



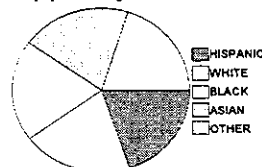
Proposed School Districts - Option 1



Legend

- Polling Place
- ▭ Precincts
- Roads
- ▭ School Districts
 - A
 - B
 - C

Pie charts represent racial breakdown of population age 18 and over.



(Percentages are approximate due to rounding)

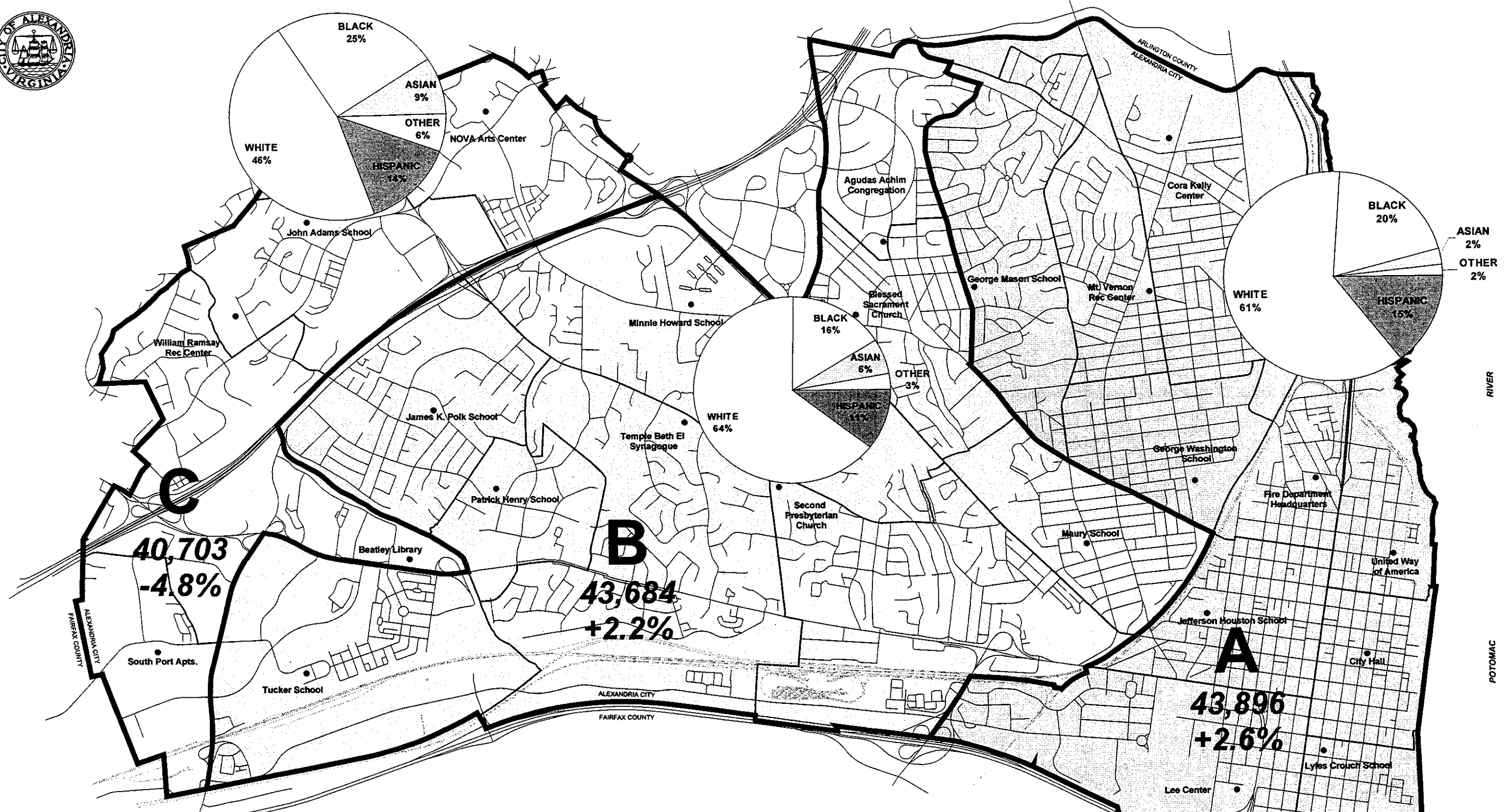
1234	Total Population Per District
+/- %	Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population
128,283	Total City Population
42,761	Target Population

Data Resources:
Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

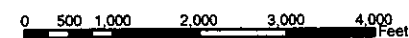
Mapping Standards:
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
Map Units - Feet

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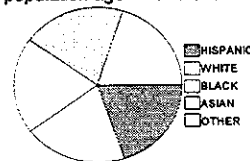


Proposed School Districts - Option 2



- Legend**
- Polling Place
 - ▭ Precincts
 - Roads
 - ▭ School Districts
 - A
 - B
 - C

Pie charts represent racial breakdown of population age 18 and over.



(Percentages are approximate due to rounding.)

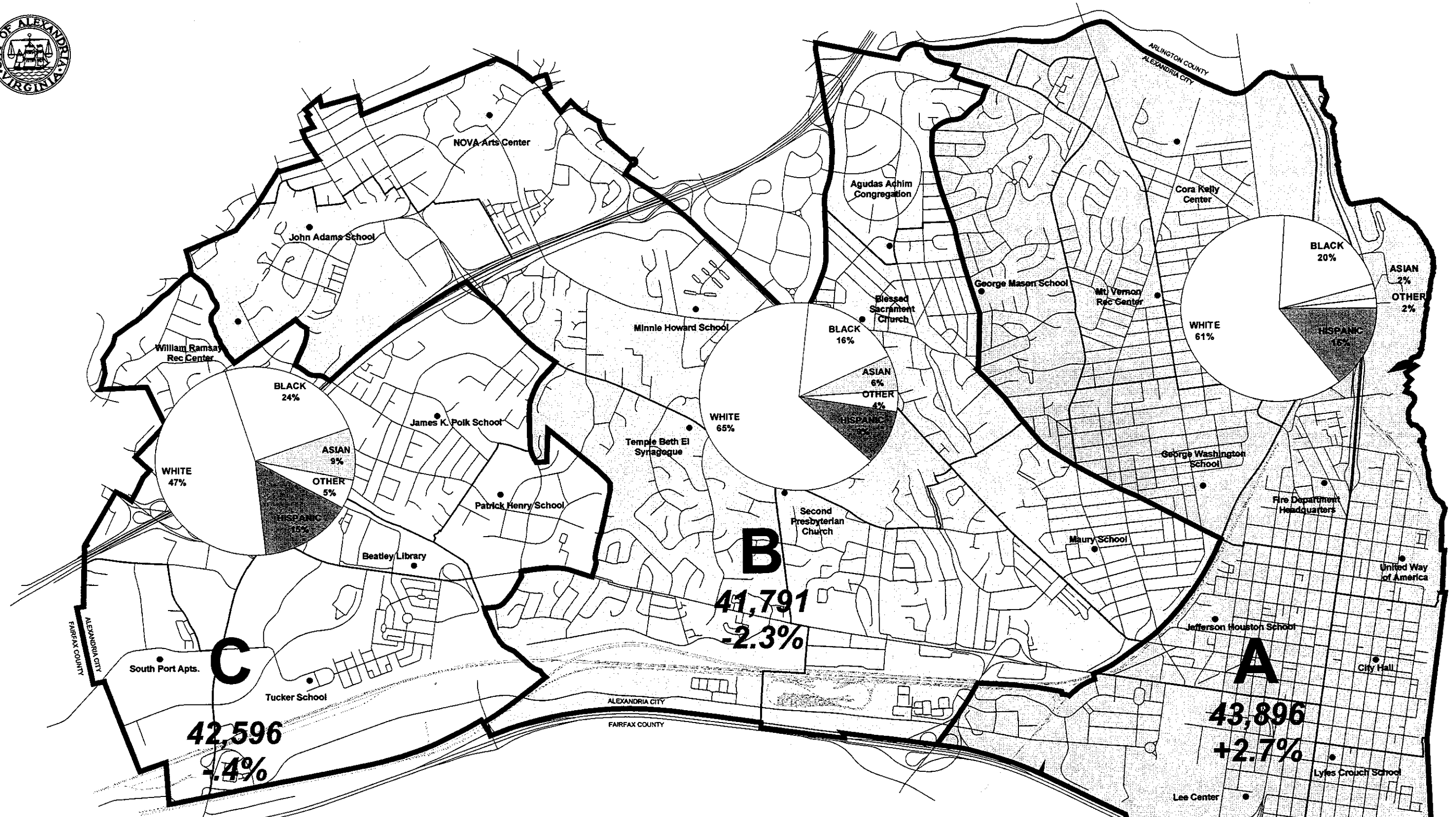
1234	Total Population Per District
+/- %	Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population
128,283	Total City Population
42,761	Target Population

Data Resources:
 Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

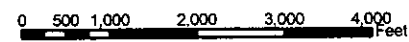
Mapping Standards:
 Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
 Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units - Feet

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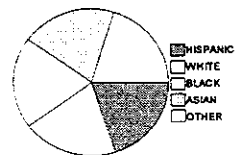


Proposed School Districts - Option 3



- Legend**
- Polling Place
 - ▭ Precincts
 - Roads
 - ▭ School Districts: A, B, C

Pie charts represent racial breakdown of population age 18 and over.



(Percentages are approximate due to rounding.)

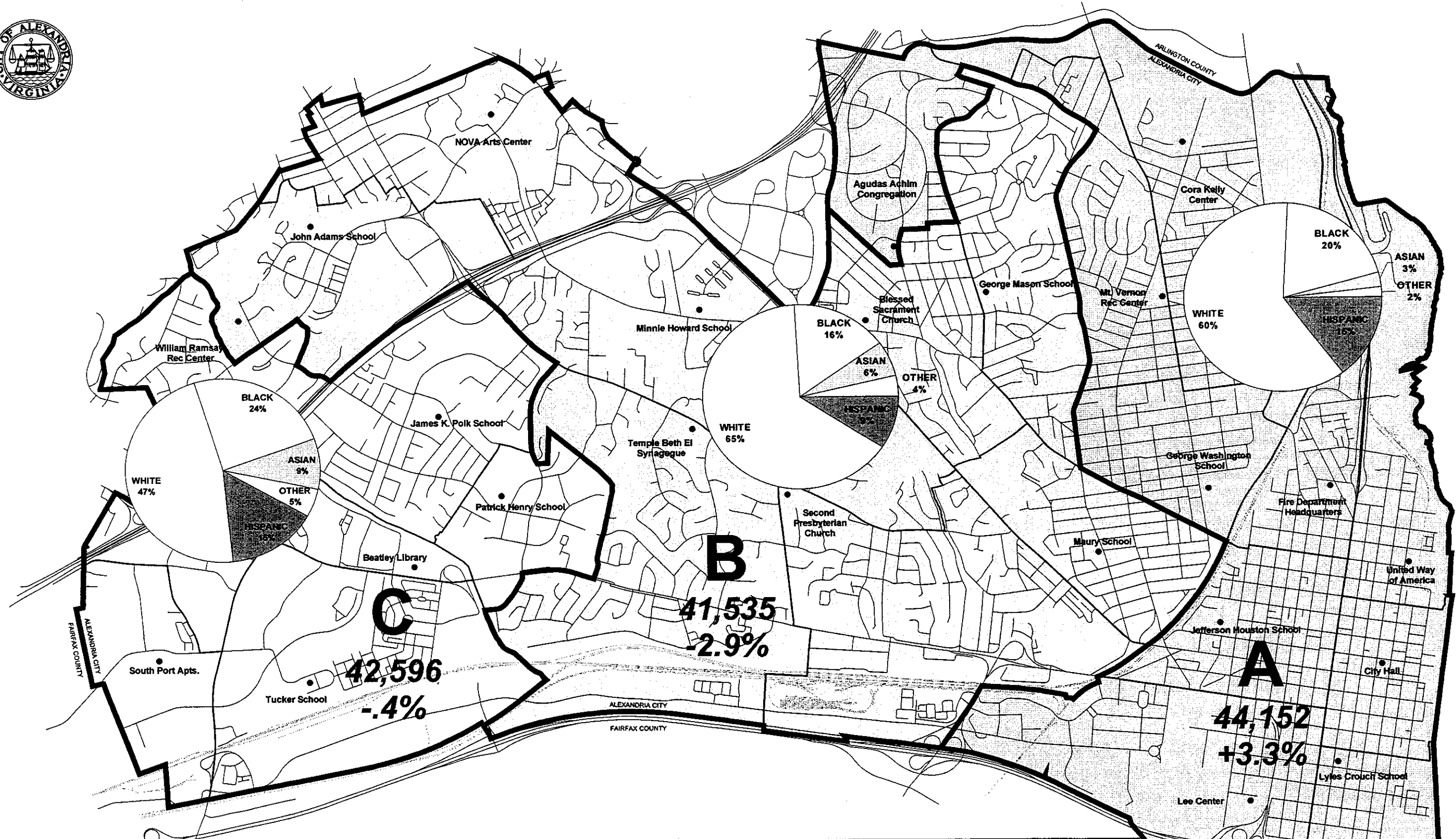
1234	Total Population Per District
+/- %	Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population
128,283	Total City Population
42,761	Target Population

Data Resources: Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

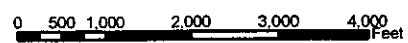
Mapping Standards: Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic Map Units - Feet

This map was produced by the GIS Section of the Planning and Zoning Department, City of Alexandria

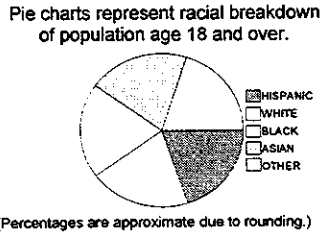
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Proposed School Districts - Option 4



- Legend**
- Polling Place
 - School Districts
 - Precincts
 - Roads
- A
 B
 C



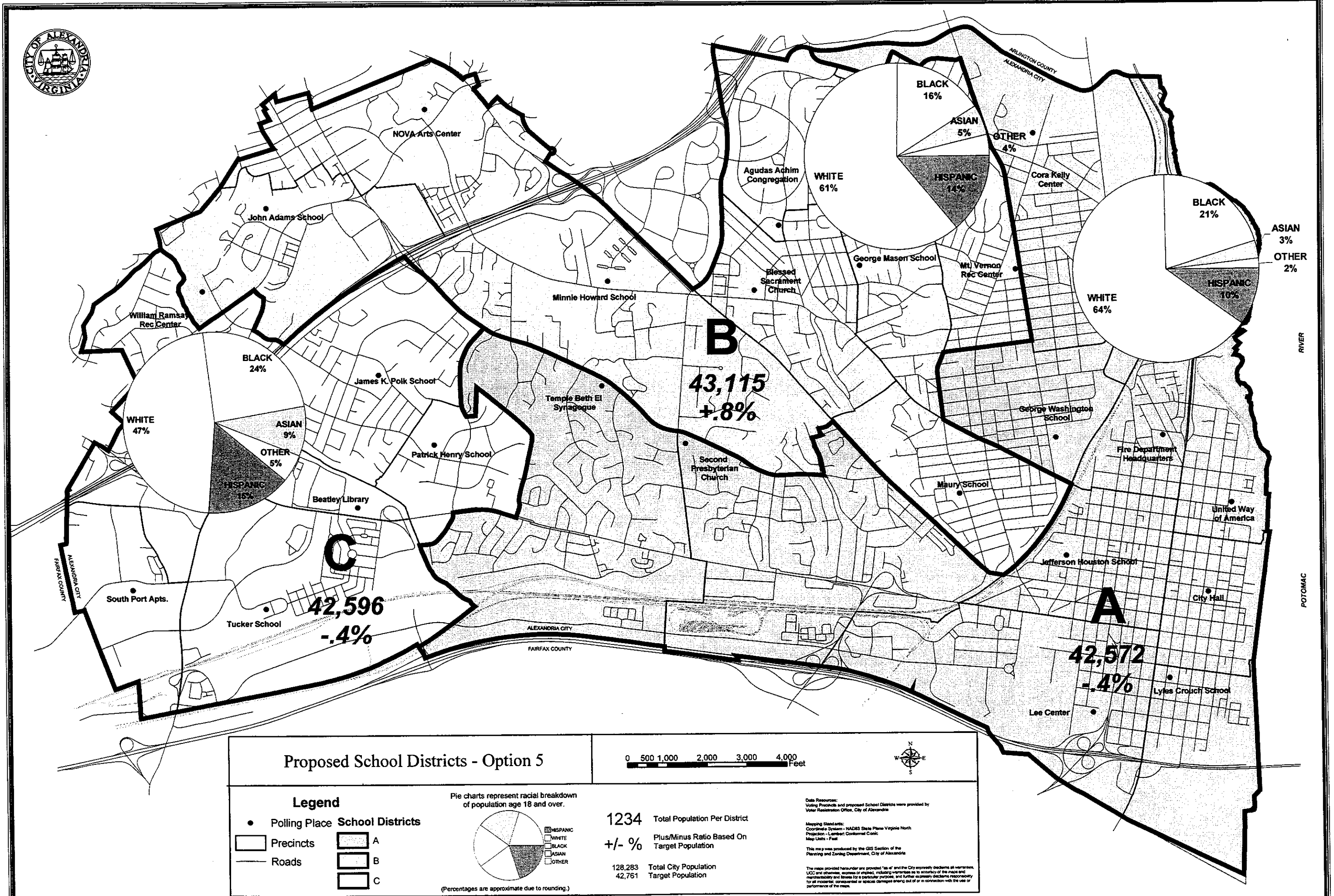
1234	Total Population Per District
+/- %	Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population
128,283	Total City Population
42,761	Target Population

Data Resources:
 Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria.

Mapping Standards:
 Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units - Feet

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1234 Total Population Per District
 +/- % Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population
 128,283 Total City Population
 42,761 Target Population

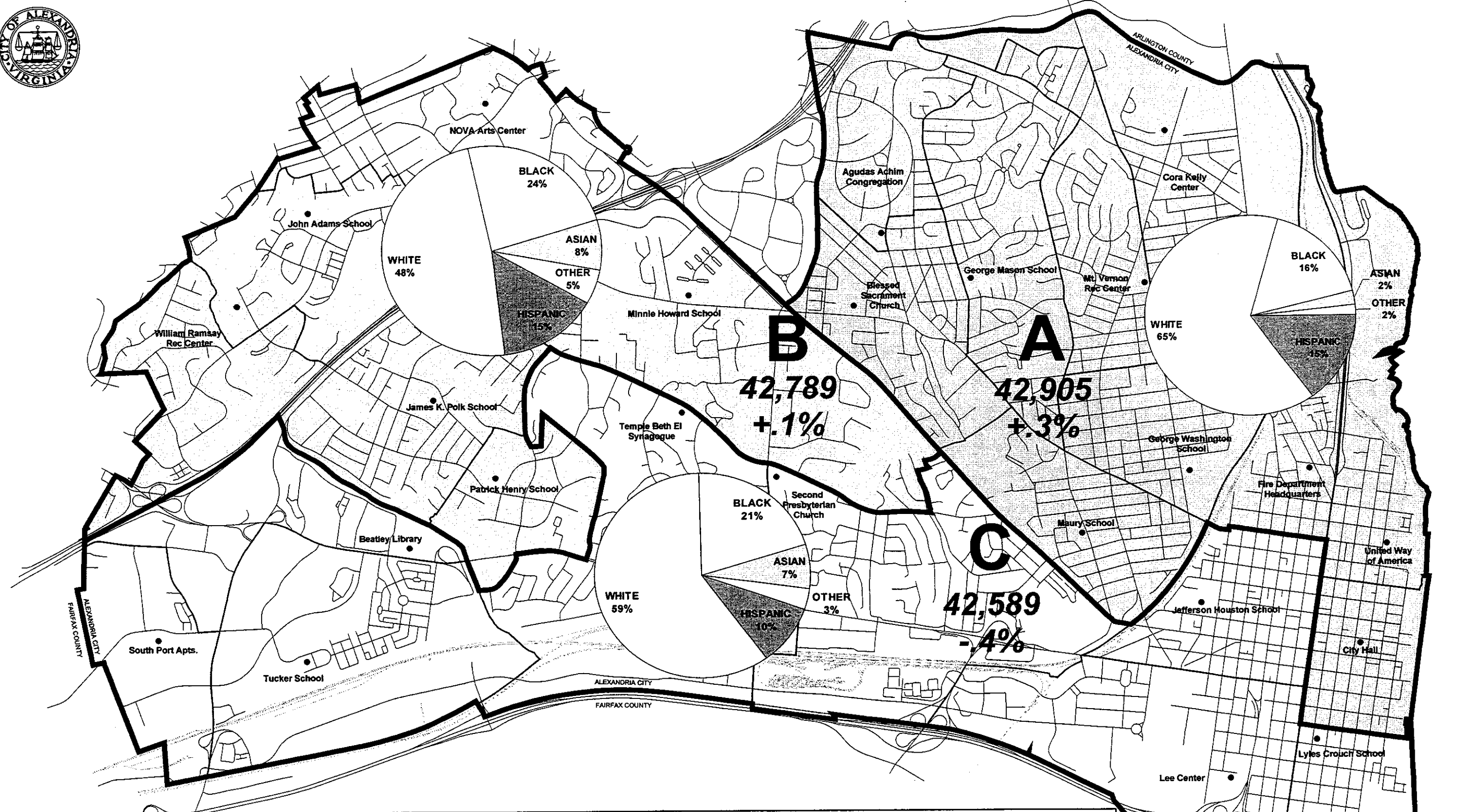
Data Resources:
 Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

Mapping Standards:
 Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units - Feet

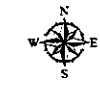
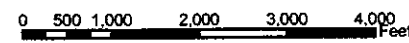
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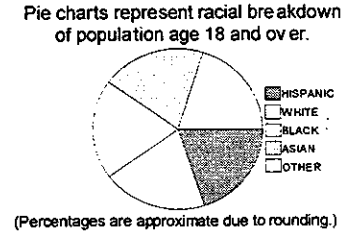
(Percentages are approximate due to rounding.)



Proposed School Districts - Option 6



- Legend**
- Polling Place
 - ▭ Precincts
 - Roads
 - ▭ School Districts
 - A
 - B
 - C



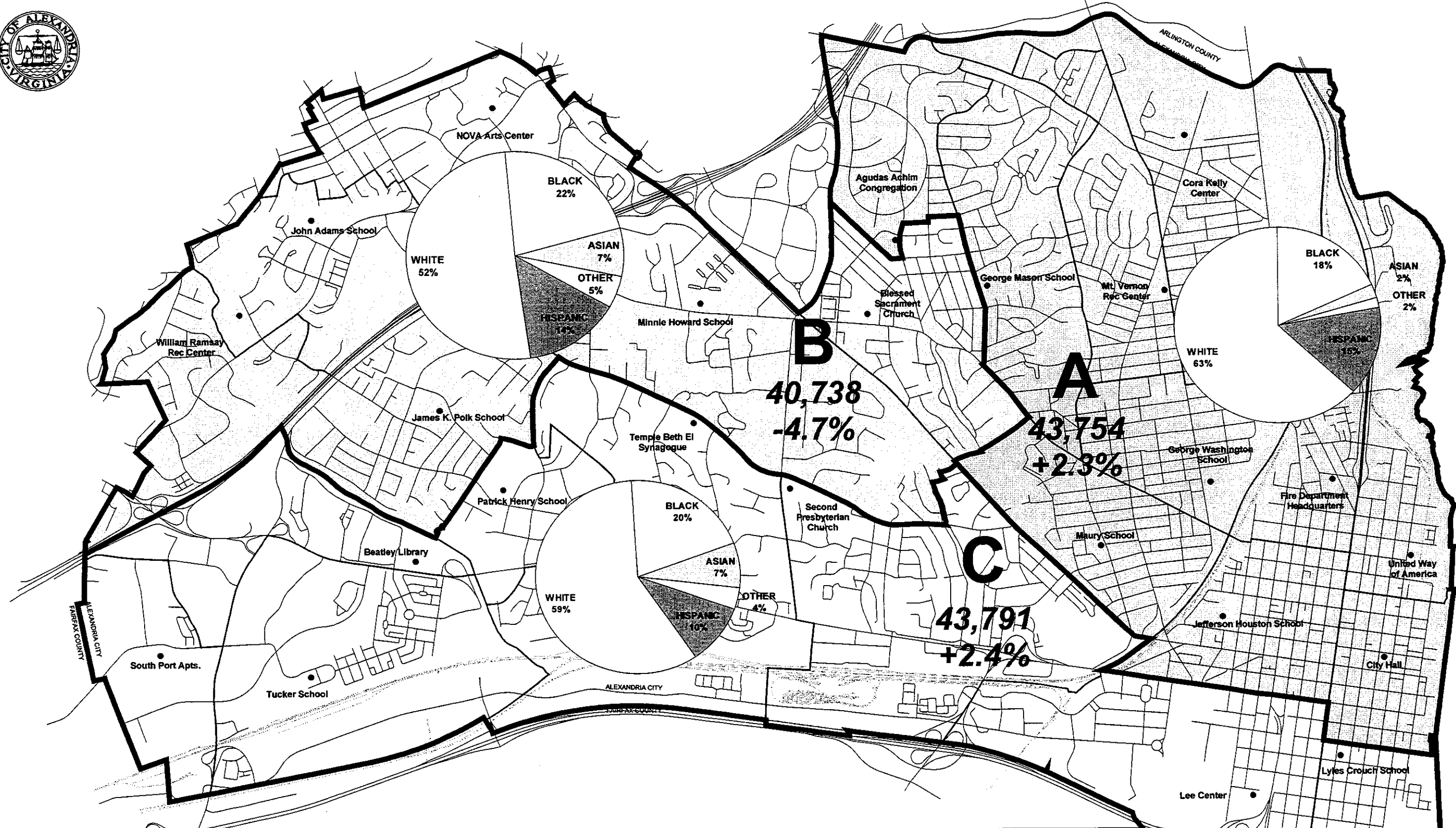
1234	Total Population Per District
+/- %	Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population
128,283	Total City Population
42,761	Target Population

Data Resources:
 Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

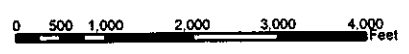
Mapping Standards:
 Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
 Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units - Feet

This map was produced by the GIS Section of the Planning and Zoning Department, City of Alexandria

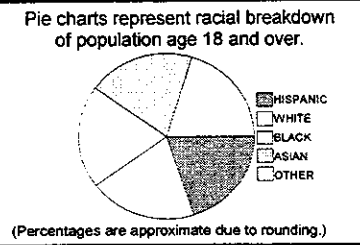
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Proposed School Districts - Option 7



- Legend**
- Polling Place
 - ▭ Precincts
 - Roads
 - ▭ School District A
 - ▭ School District B
 - ▭ School District C



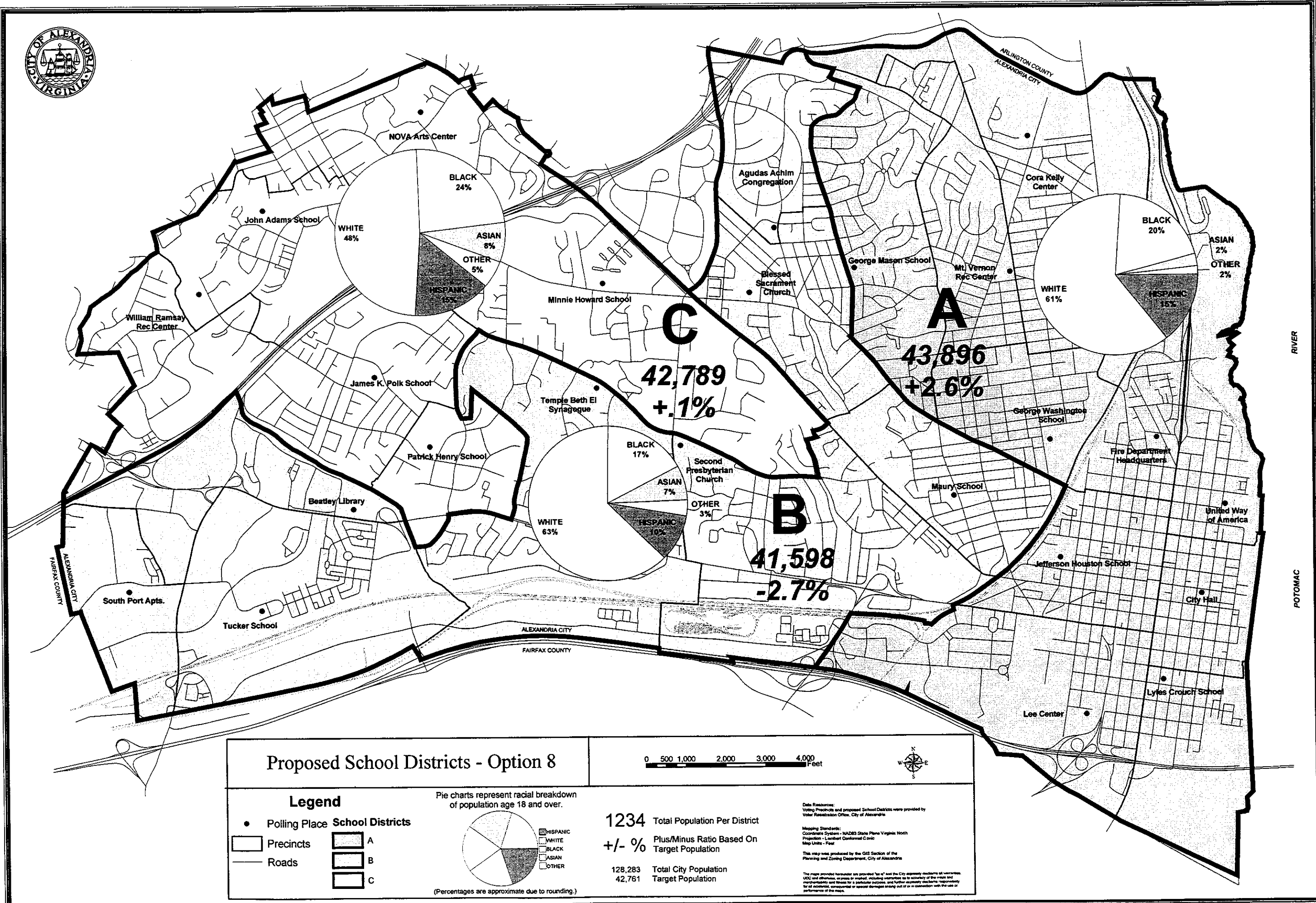
1234	Total Population Per District
+/- %	Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population
128,283	Total City Population
42,761	Target Population

Data Resources: Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

Mapping Standards: Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units - Feet

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Proposed School Districts - Option 8



Legend

- Polling Place
- ▭ Precincts
- Roads
- ▭ School Districts: A, B, C

Pie charts represent racial breakdown of population age 18 and over.

(Percentages are approximate due to rounding.)

1234 Total Population Per District
+/- % Plus/Minus Ratio Based On Target Population

128,283 Total City Population
 42,761 Target Population

Data Resources: Voting Precincts and proposed School Districts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria.

Mapping Standards: Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia West Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic; Map Units - Feet.

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OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

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CITY ATTORNEY

STEVEN L. ROSENBERG
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY

ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEYS
JILL R. APPLEBAUM
CATHERINE RICHARDS CLEMENT
MELISSA C. LUCK
GEORGE McANDREWS
KAREN S. SNOW

April 22, 2002

Dear Alexandria Resident:

Re: Additional Information Concerning Proposed School Board
Redistricting and Extended Comment Period

As you may remember, on March 15, 2002, I wrote to provide you with information about the process that is being used to redraw the school board election district boundaries prior to the May 2003 general election, and to invite you to participate in that process. As part of that process, the City held an informational community meeting at T.C. Williams High School on April 3. At that meeting, members of the public requested certain additional information for consideration in evaluating potential new district boundaries, and also requested that City staff prepare several nine-single-member district options, as well as some additional multi-member-district options.

That information and six additional school board election district options are included with this letter. The same information and the new options have also been posted on the City's web site. A brief description of the new material follows. In addition, in order to give the public additional time to review and comment on this new material prior to the preparation of a report by staff to City Council, **the public comment period has been extended from April 26, 2002, until May 7, 2002.**

The additional information consists of five items:

1. A map showing the attendance boundaries for the Alexandria public schools.
2. A map showing the number of enrolled public school students by voting precinct.
3. A map showing the school board election districts as originally established in 1994, together with a summary of the demographic data for each district.

If you are recommending in favor or against a particular option, please identify the option and your position clearly. It will be helpful to include a clear statement of the reasons for your position.

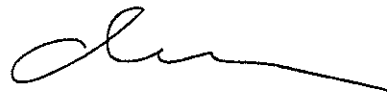
All comments must be received on or before 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 7, 2002. Comments received after that date cannot be considered by staff in formulating a recommendation and will not be included in the report to City Council.

The remaining critical dates in this process are as follows:

May 7, 2002	Public Comment Period Closes
May 14, 2002	Report Presented to City Council
May 28, 2002	City Council Public Hearing on Report and Selection of Preferred Option
June 11, 2002	Introduction of Ordinance
June 15, 2002	Public Hearing on Ordinance
June 25, 2002	Final Passage of Ordinance

These dates are subject to change by the City Council as necessary. Updated information about any changes will be posted on the City's Web site, or may be obtained by calling the City Clerk's Office at 703-838-4550.

Yours very truly,



Ignacio B. Pessoa
City Attorney

Attachments

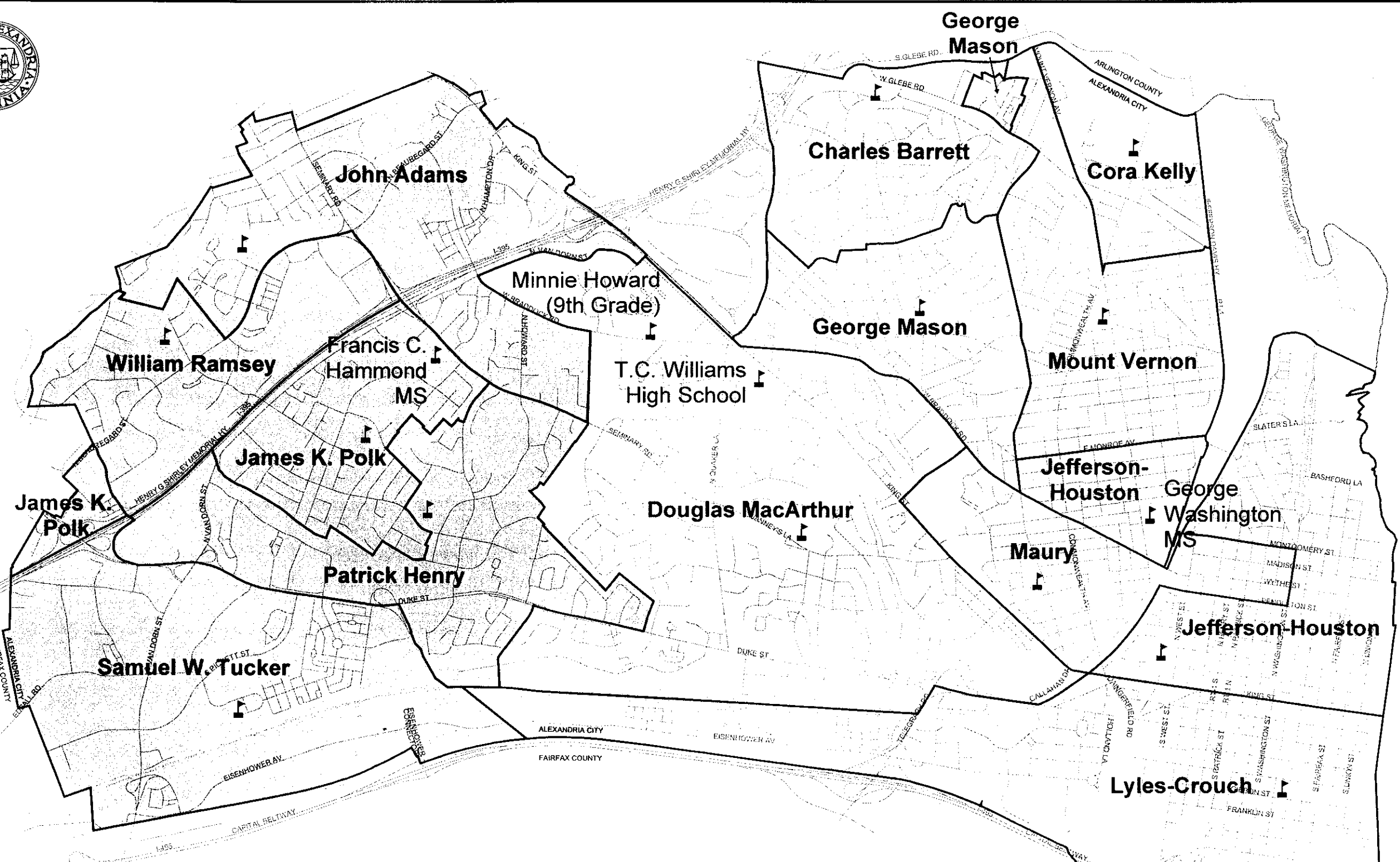
Residence of Incumbent School Board Members by Redistricting Options									
OPTIONS	Baynard	Cheatham	Danforth	Digilio	Eaton	Johnson	Kenealy	Lewis	Wilkoff
Current Arrangement									
CURRENT	B	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	B
Three District - Three Member Options									
OPTION 1	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	C	B
OPTION 2	B	A	B	A	B	C	B	B	C
OPTION 3	B	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 4	B	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 5	B	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 6	A	A	C	B	A	B	B	C	B
OPTION 7	A	A	C	C	A	B	B	C	B
OPTION 8	B	A	B	A	B	C	C	B	C
Nine District - One Member Options									
OPTION 9	E	B	E	D	E	F	H	I	F
OPTION 10	C	C	H	D	C	E	H	I	E
OPTION 11	C	C	H	D	C	E	H	I	E
OPTION 12	C	B	H	D	C	E	H	I	E
Four District - Multi Member Options									
OPTION 13	B	B	C	B	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 14	B	B	C	B	B	C	C	C	C

SEE ATTACHED CORRECTED VERSION

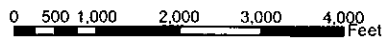
Residence of Incumbent School Board Members by Redistricting Options									
OPTIONS	Baynard	Cheatham	Danforth	Digillo	Eaton	Johnson	Kenealy	Lewis	Wilkoff
Current Arrangement									
CURRENT	A	A	B	A	B	B*	C	C	B
Three District - Three Member Options									
OPTION 1	A	A	B	A	B	B	B	C	B
OPTION 2	A	A	B	A	B	C	B	B	C
OPTION 3	A	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 4	A	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 5	A	A	A	A	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 6	A	A	C	C	A	B	B	C	B
OPTION 7	A	A	C	C	A	B	B	C	B
OPTION 8	A	A	B	A	B	C	C	B	C
Nine District - One Member Options									
OPTION 9	B	B	E	D	E	F	H	I	F
OPTION 10	C	C	H	D	C	E	H	I	E
OPTION 11	C	C	H	D	C	E	H	I	E
OPTION 12	B	B	H	D	C	E	H	I	E
Four District - Multi Member Options									
OPTION 13	B	B	C	B	B	B	C	C	B
OPTION 14	B	B	C	B	B	C	C	C	C

* Though Ms. Johnson now resides in District B, she is one of the three School Board members from District C. When Ms. Johnson was elected in 2000, her residence was in District C.

CORRECTED VERSION



Alexandria Public Schools - Attendance Boundaries



April, 2002



- Legend**
- Middle Schools Elementary Schools
 - Francis C. Hammond Roads
 - George Washington

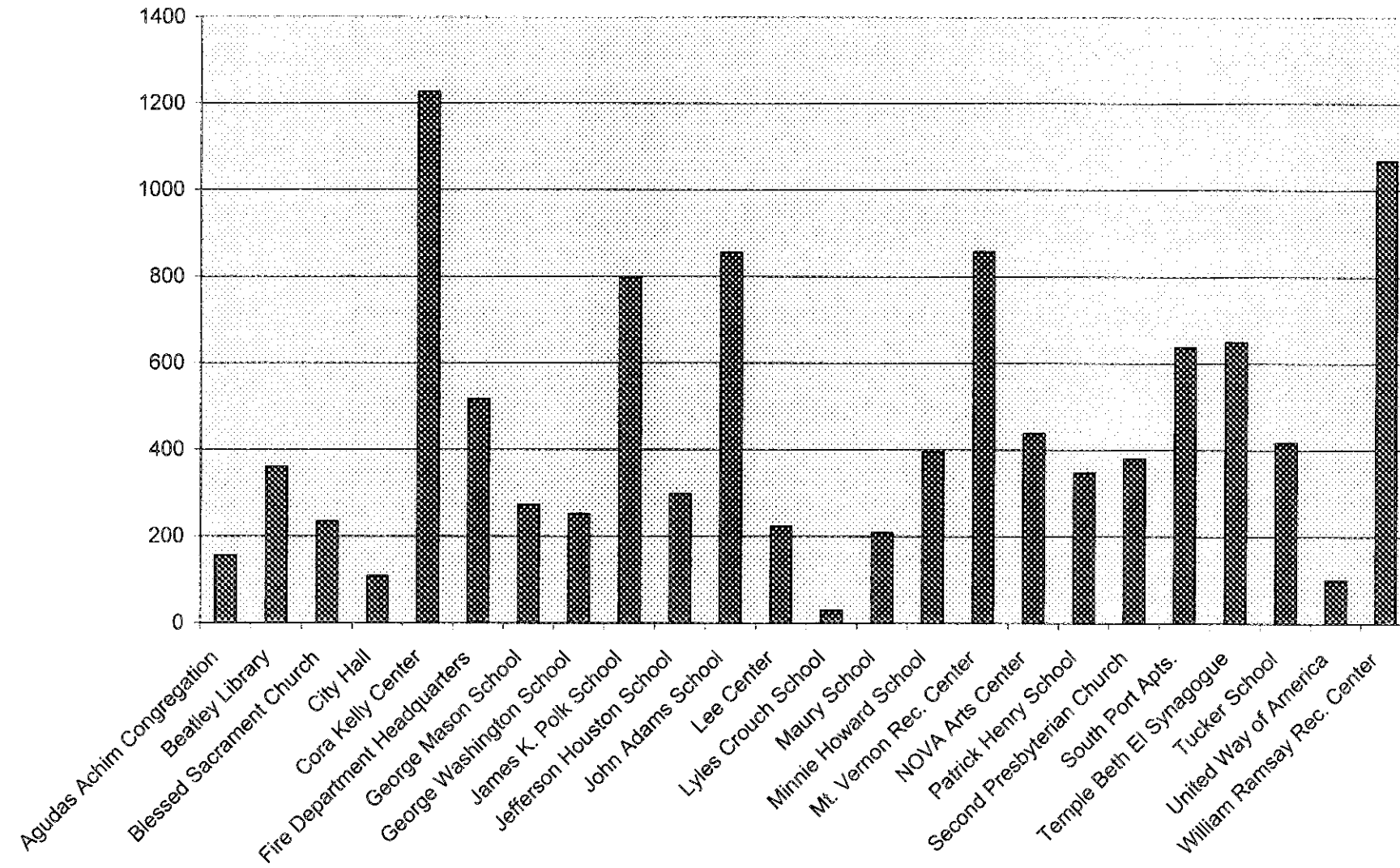
Data Resources:
School District boundaries were provided by Citizens Assistance.

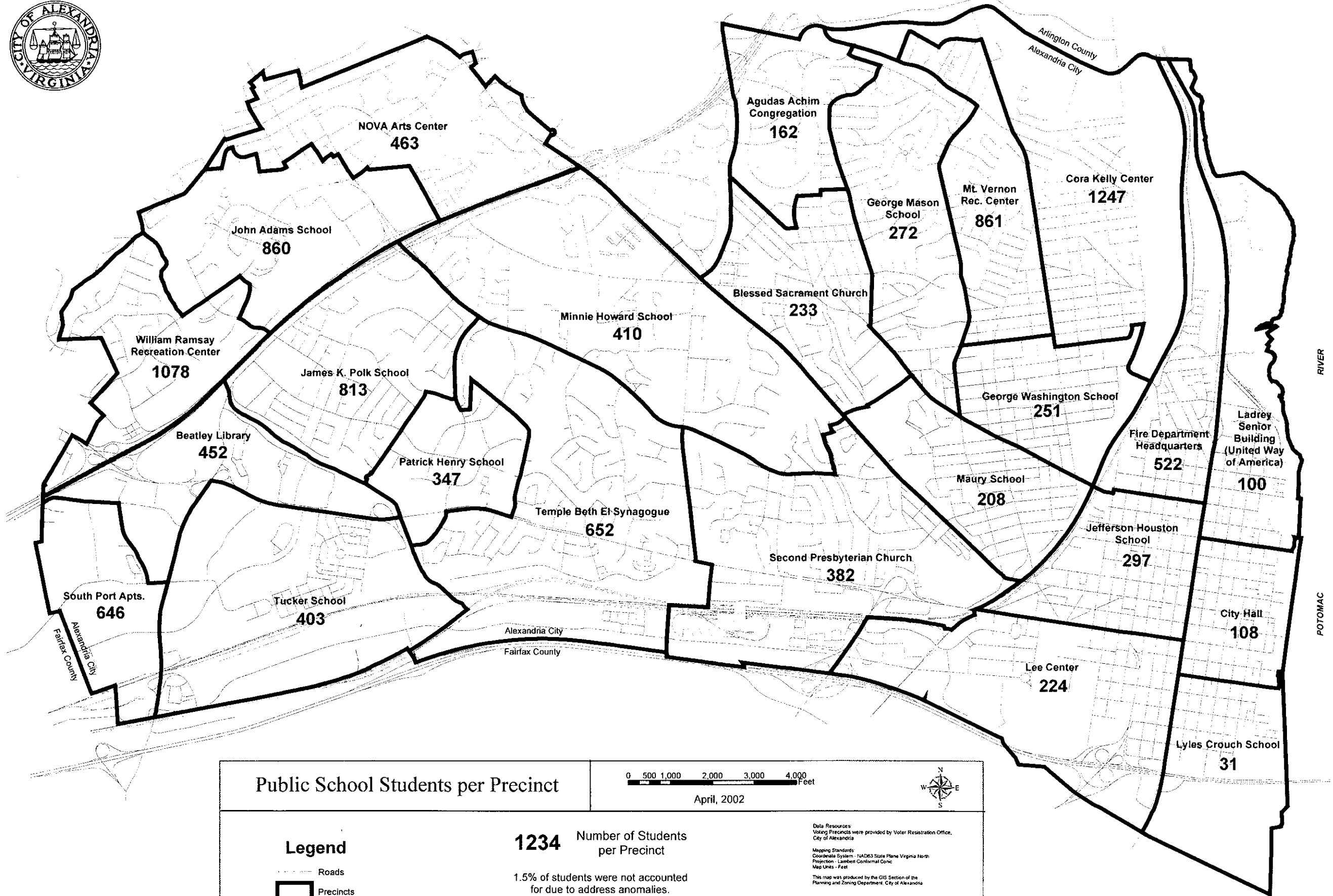
Mapping Standards:
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
Map Units - Feet

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Number of Children in Public Schools per Voting Precinct





Public School Students per Precinct

April, 2002

Legend

- Roads
- Precincts

1234 Number of Students per Precinct

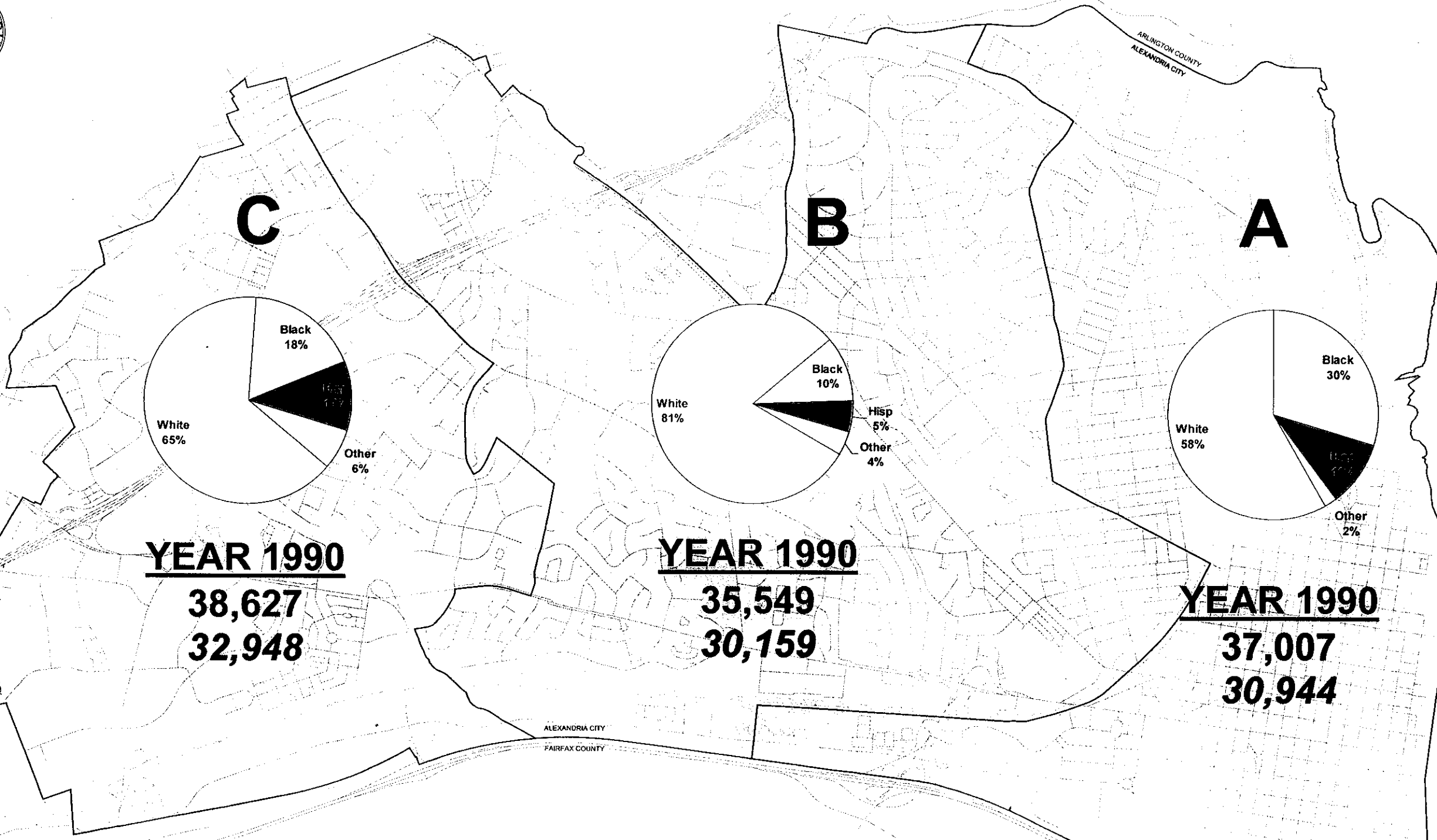
1.5% of students were not accounted for due to address anomalies.

Data Resources
 Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

Mapping Standards
 Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units - Feet

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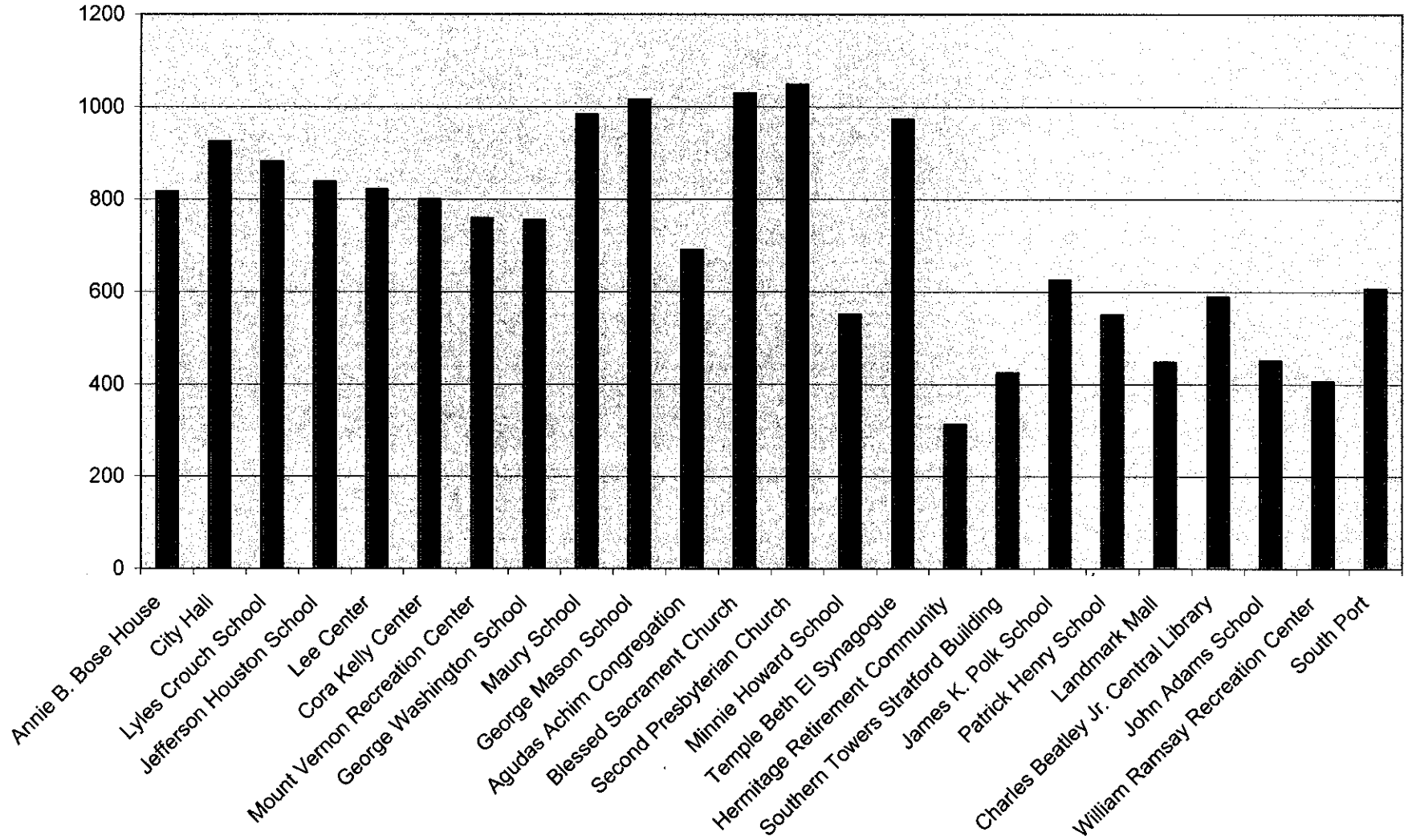
YEAR 1990
38,627
32,948

YEAR 1990
35,549
30,159

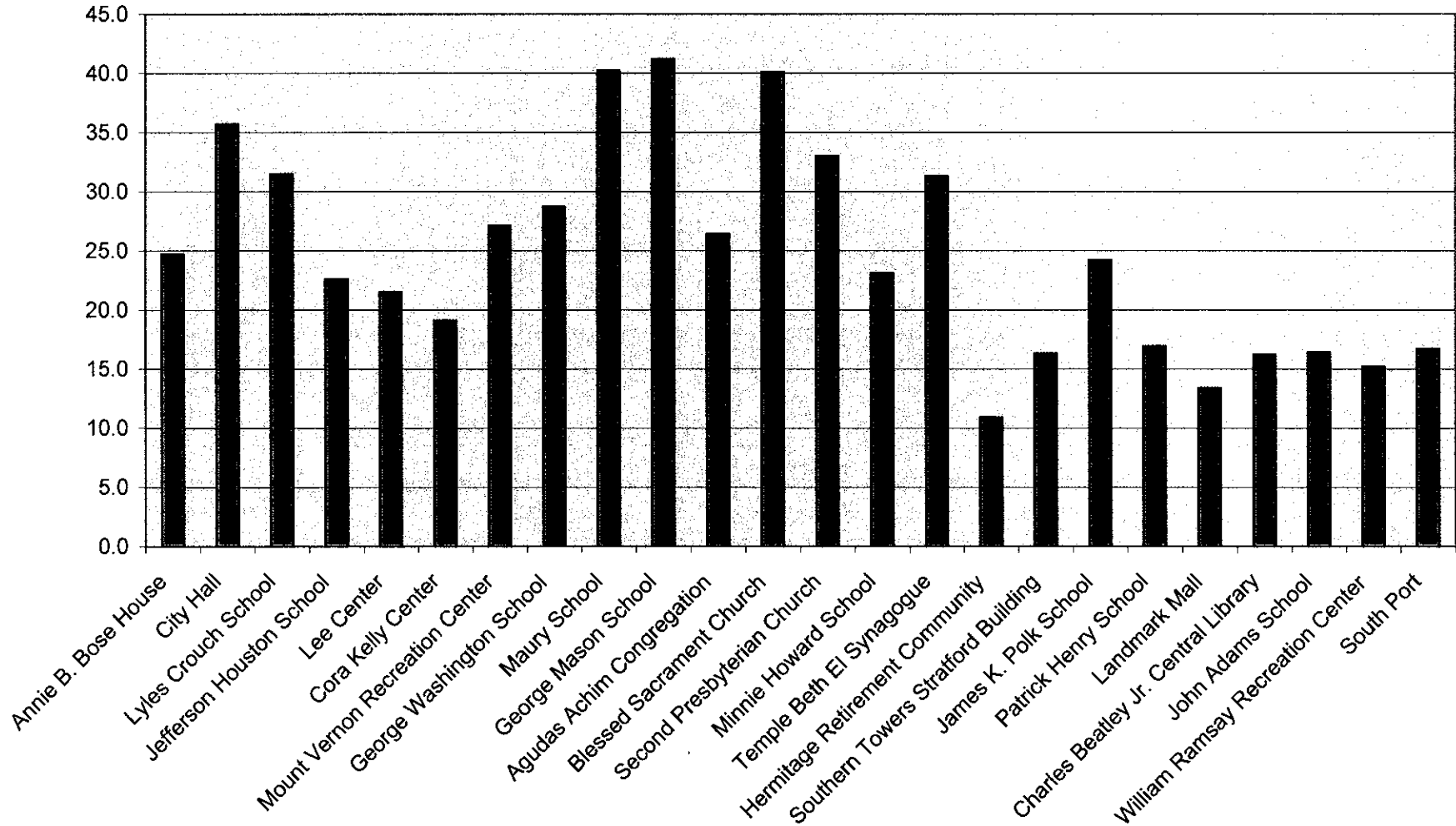
YEAR 1990
37,007
30,944

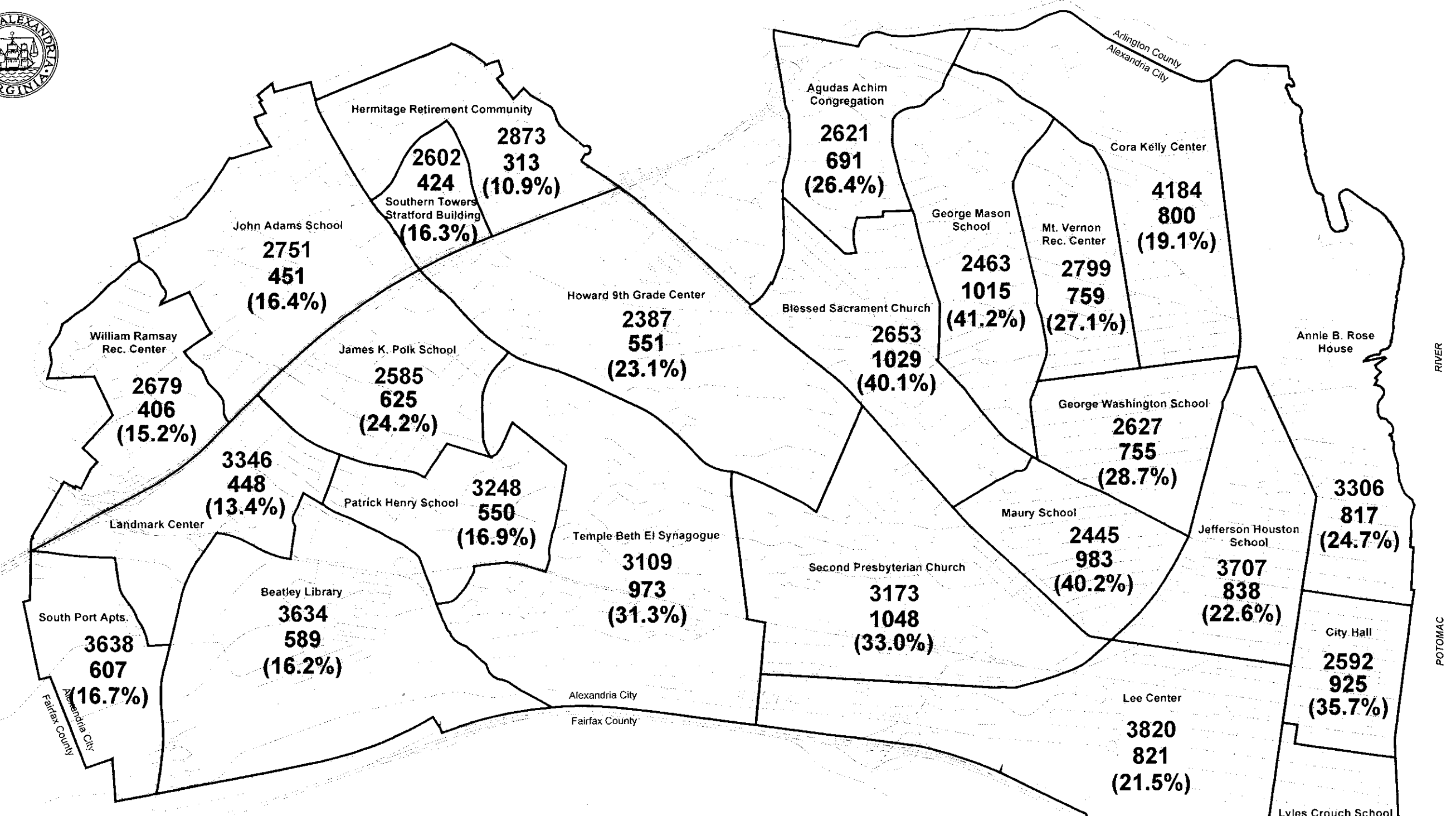
<p>School Districts Established in 1994 Data Aggregated from 1990 Census</p>		<p>0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet</p> <p>April, 2002</p>			
<p>Legend Current School Districts</p> <p>□ A □ B □ C</p>		<p>Pie charts represent racial breakdown of population age 18 and over.</p> <p>(Percentages are approximate due to rounding.)</p>		<p>12,345 Total Population Per District 12,345 Population 18 and Over</p> <p>Data Source: December 20, 1993 Section 5, Submission to Justice Department</p>	
				<p><small>Data Resources: School Districts were provided by 1994 redistricting plan</small></p> <p><small>Mapping Standards: Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic Map Units - Feet</small></p> <p><small>This map was produced by the GIS Section of the Planning and Zoning Department, City of Alexandria</small></p> <p><small>The maps provided hereunder are provided "as is" and the City expressly disclaims all warranties, including but not limited to, accuracy, completeness, and reliability of the data and any other information contained herein for a particular purpose, and further disclaims all liability for any errors or omissions in the maps and any other information contained herein.</small></p>	

Voter Turnout - May 2000 Elections

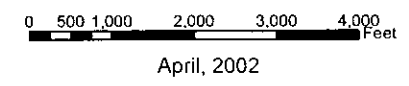


Voter Turnout by Percent of Registered Voters May 2000 Elections





May 2000 Voting Results - Old Precincts
City Council & School Board Election



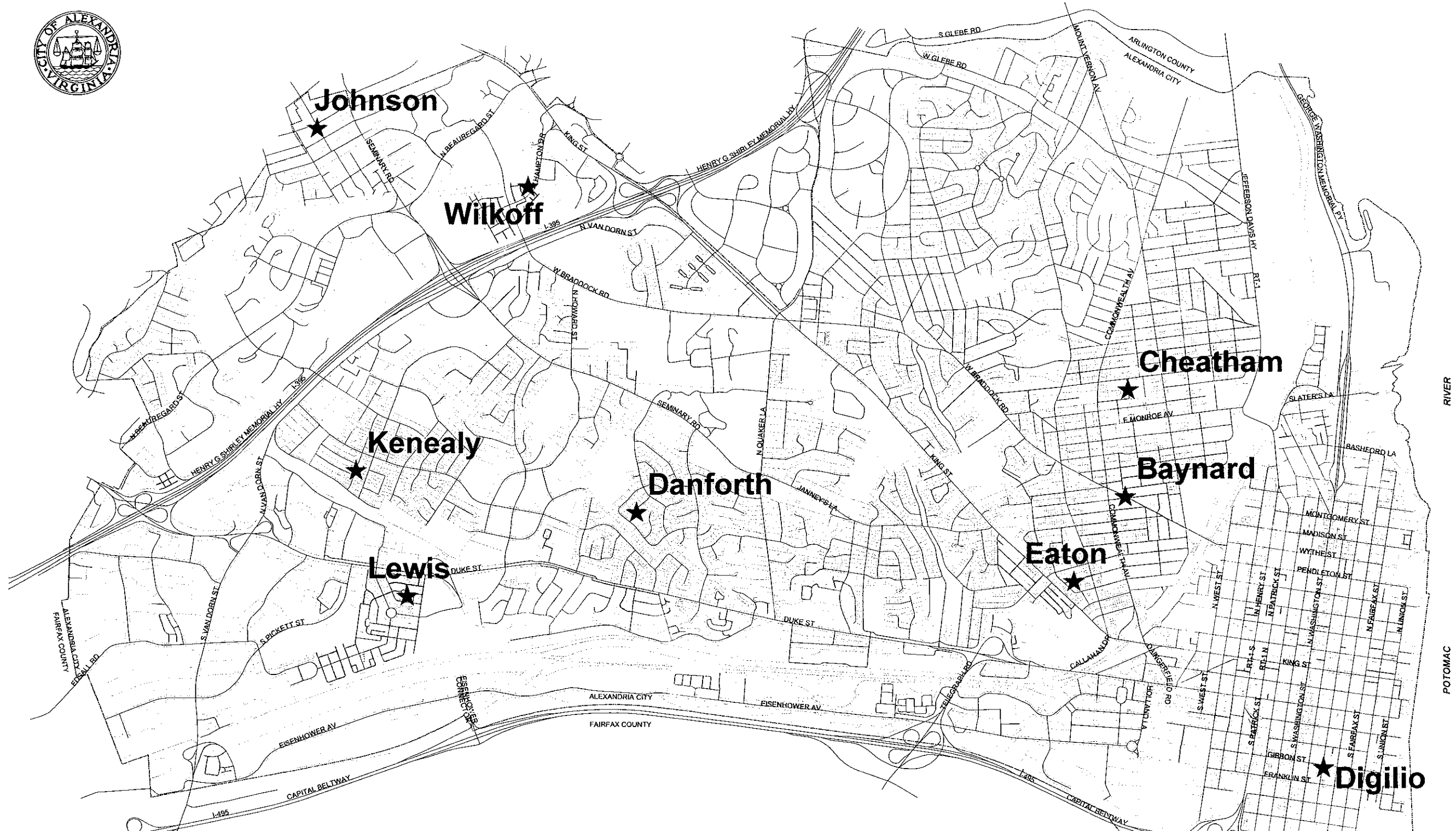
Legend	1234	Registered Voters
Old Precincts	123	Voter Turnout (May 2000 Election)
Roads	(12.3%)	Percent Voting

Data Resources:
Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

Mapping Standards:
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
Map Units - Feet

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School Board Members

0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

April, 2002



Legend

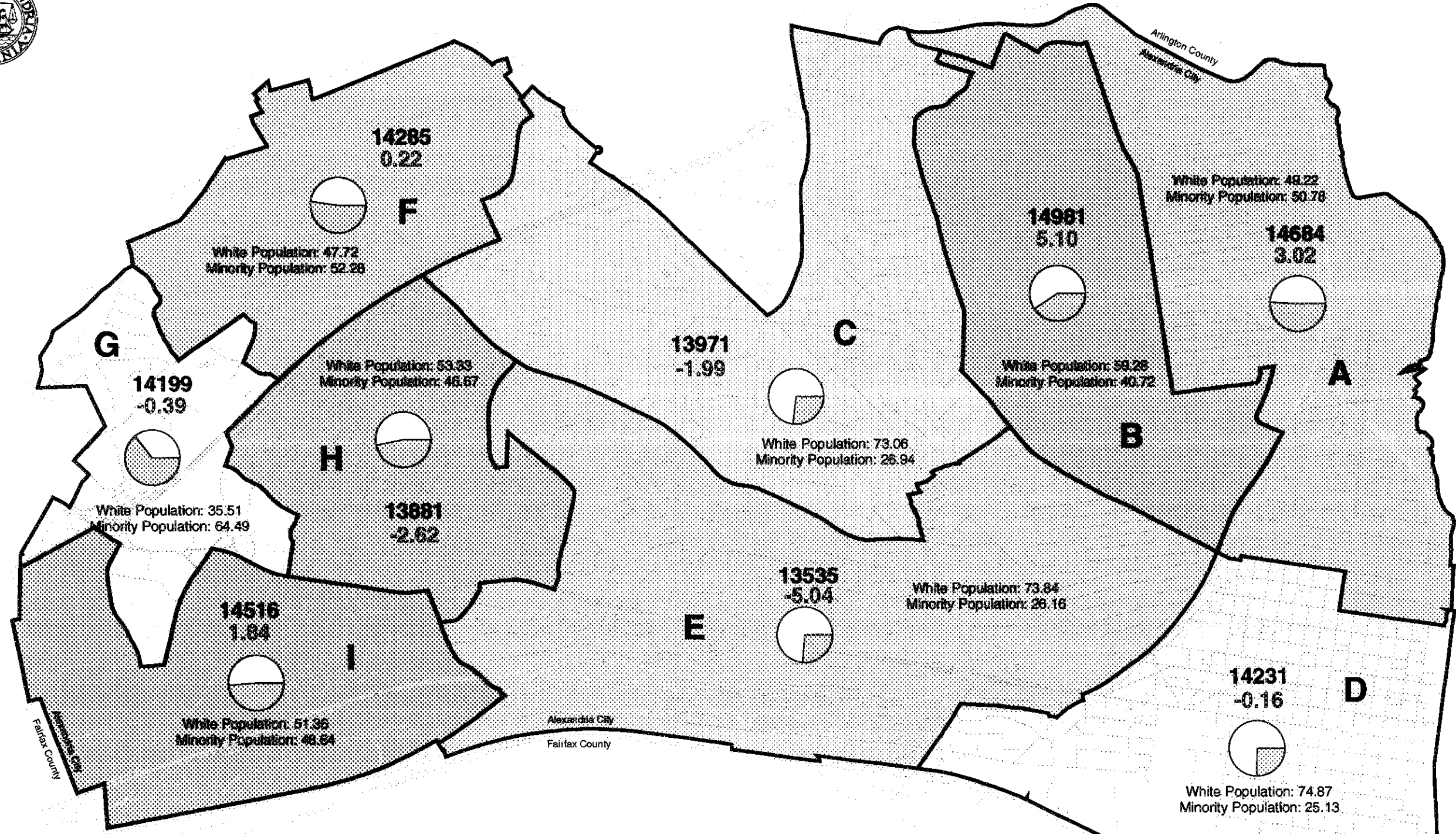
- ★ School Board Member
- Roads
- ▭ Parcels

Data Resources

Mapping Standards:
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
Map Units - Feet

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Proposed School Districts - Option 9
April, 2002



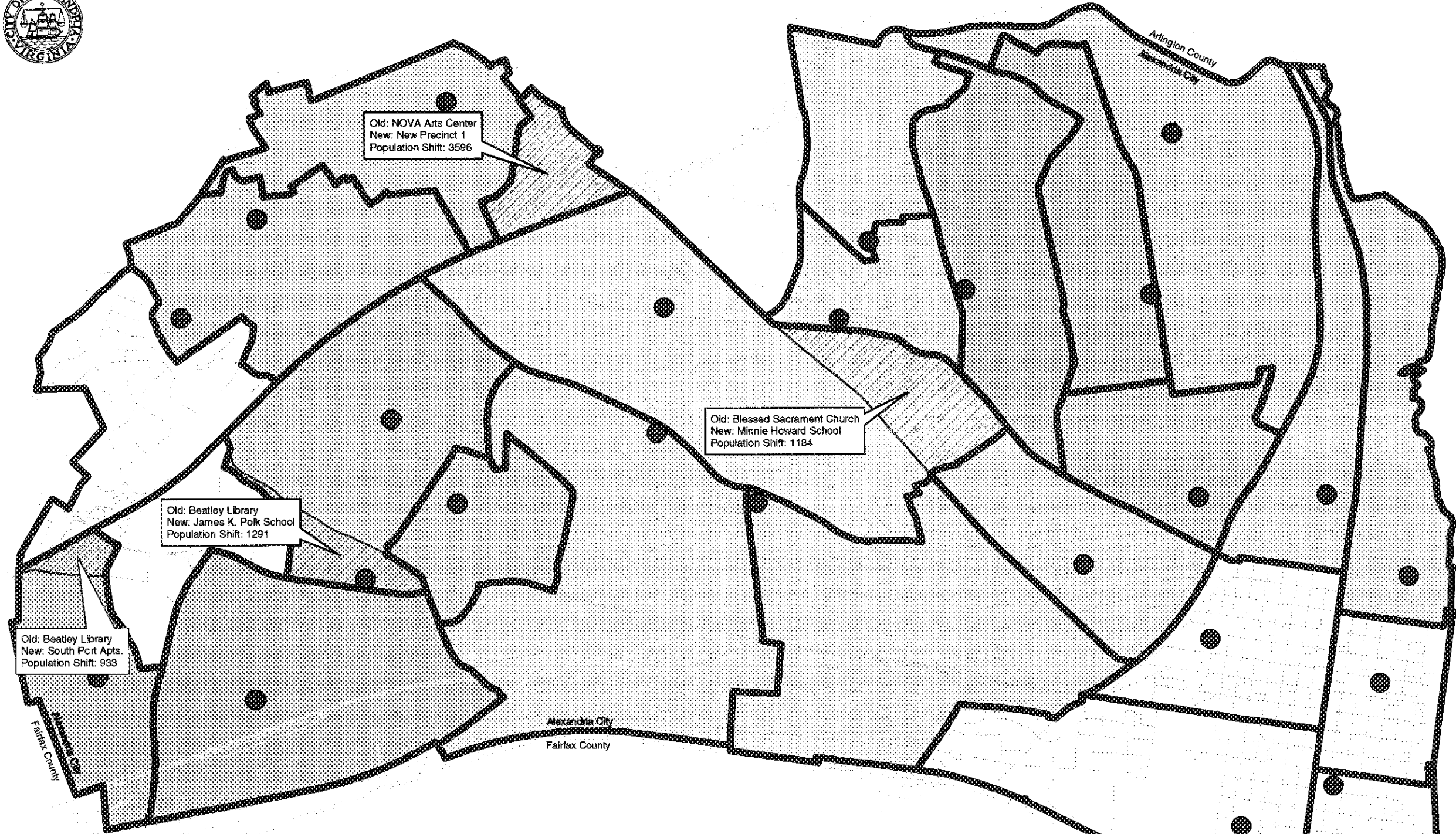
Legend

A	D	G
B	E	H
C	F	I

White Population Over 18
 Minority Population Over 18

1234 Total Population
1234 Population Deviation

Data Sources:
Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria.
Mapping Standards:
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Standard Continental Conic
Map Units - Feet
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Required Precinct Changes for Option 9
April, 2002

<p>School Districts</p> <p>A [Pattern]</p> <p>B [Pattern]</p> <p>C [Pattern]</p> <p>D [Pattern]</p>	<p>E [Pattern]</p> <p>F [Pattern]</p> <p>G [Pattern]</p> <p>H [Pattern]</p> <p>I [Pattern]</p>	<p>[Pattern] Proposed Changes</p> <p>[Pattern] Proposed Precincts</p> <p>[Pattern] Current Precincts</p> <p>[Symbol] Current Polling Place</p>
--	--	--

0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

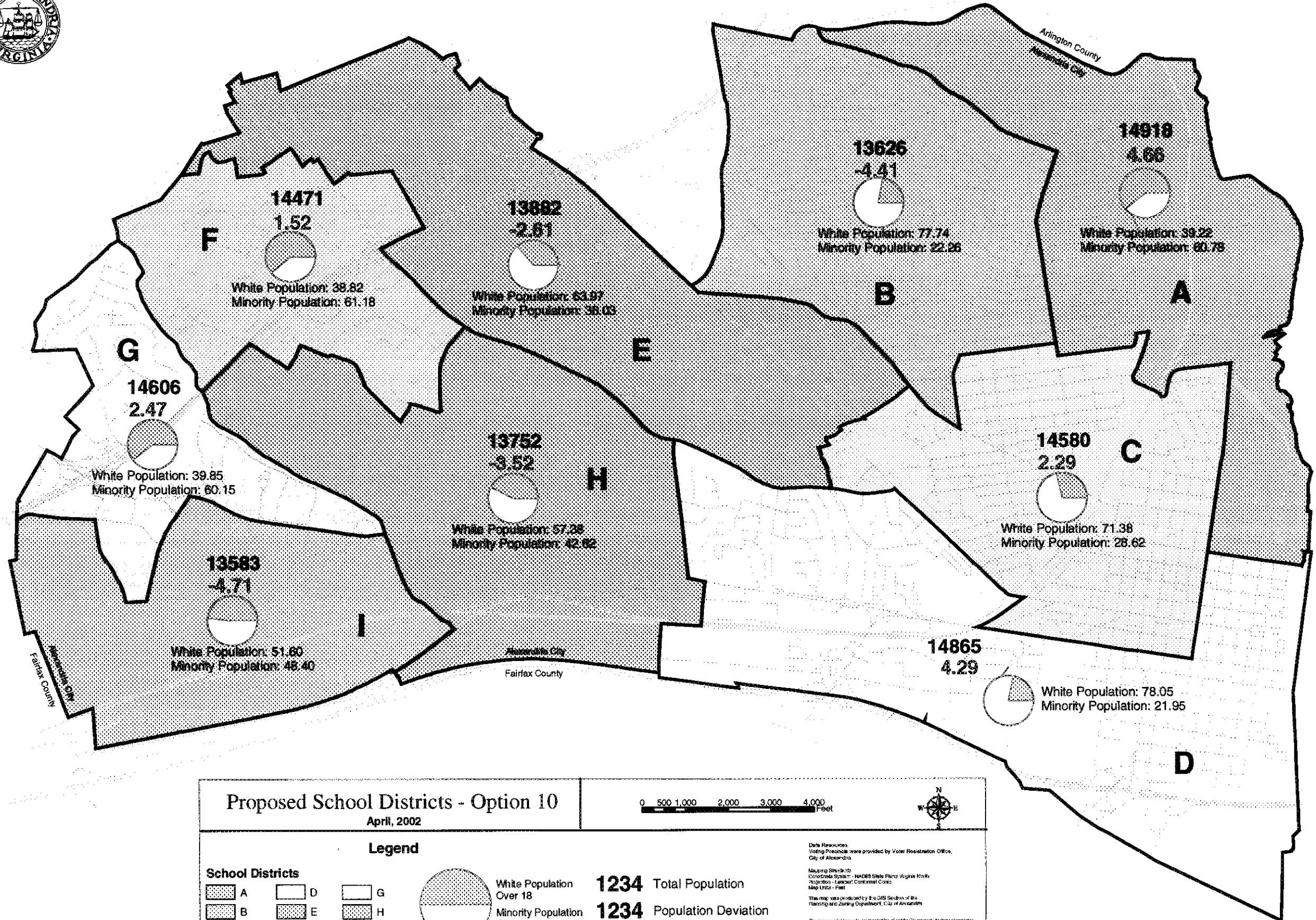
Data Provided:
Voting Precincts were provided by Water Resources Office,
City of Alexandria.

Mapping Software:
GIS: ArcView - ESRI
MapServer - Open Source
MapInfo - MapInfo

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RIVER
POTOMAC



Proposed School Districts - Option 10

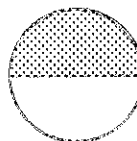
April, 2002



Legend

School Districts

- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- G
- H
- I



White Population Over 18
 Minority Population Over 18

1234 Total Population

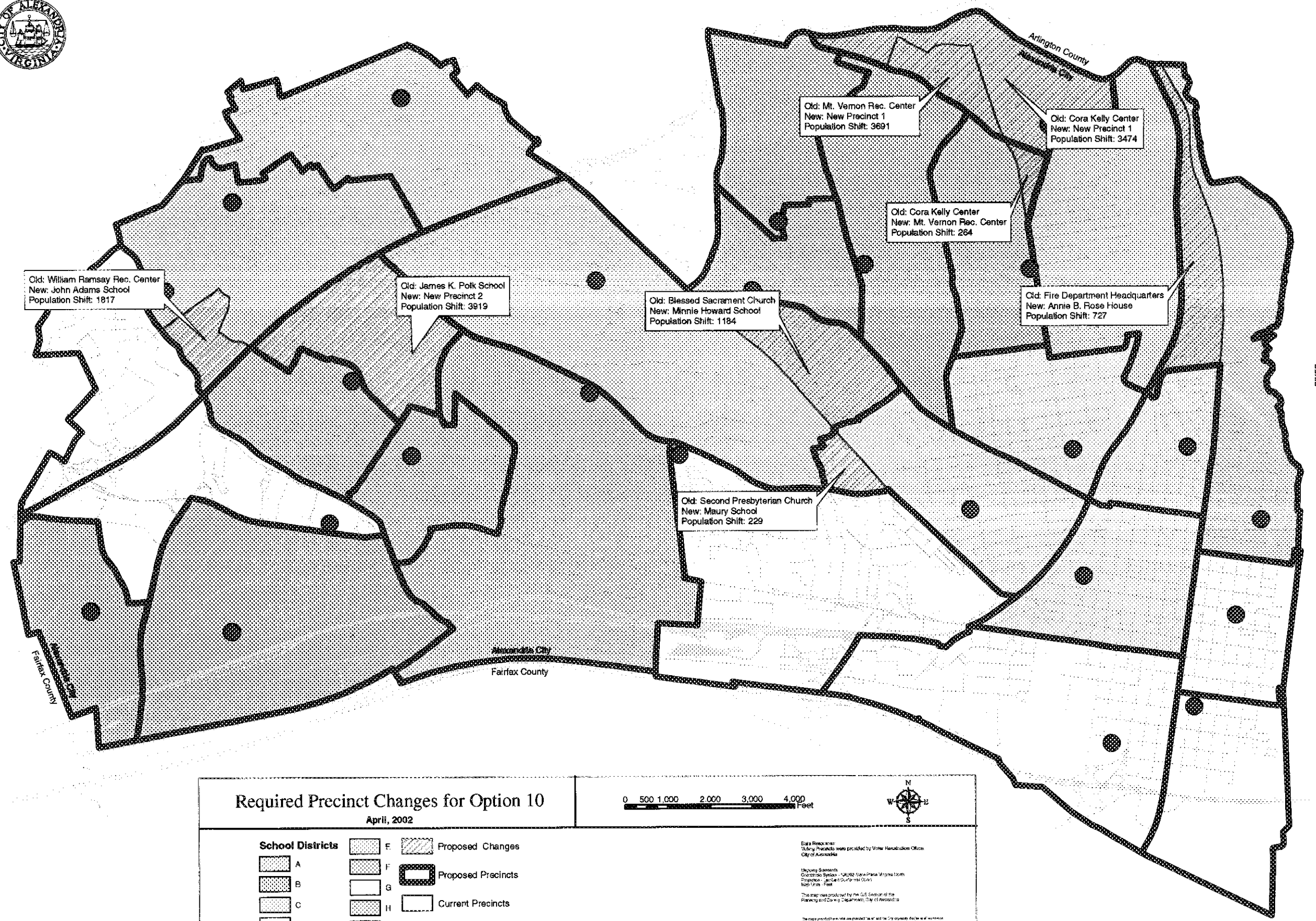
1234 Population Deviation

Data Resources:
 Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

Mapping Standards:
 Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
 Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units - Feet

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Required Precinct Changes for Option 10

April, 2002

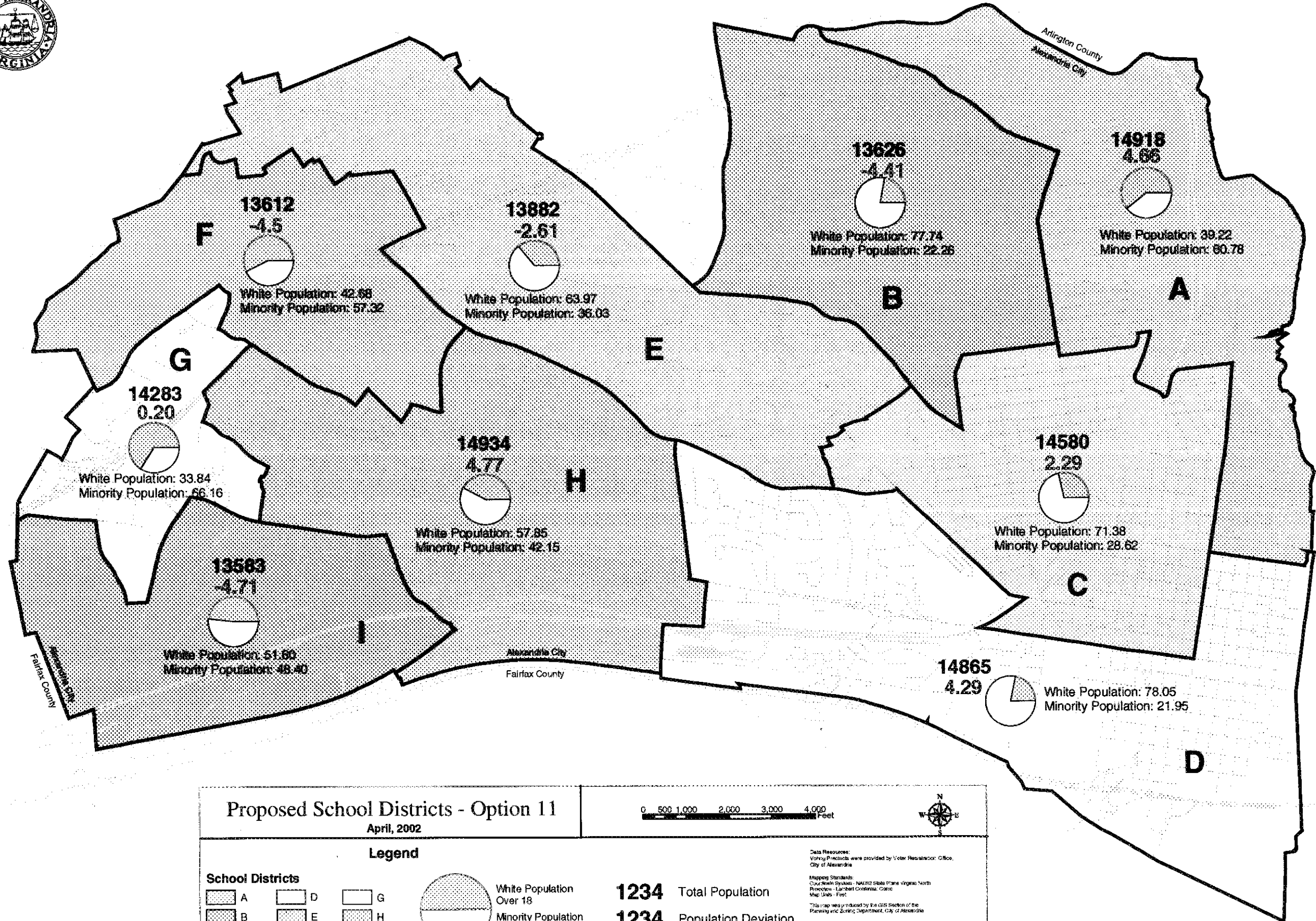
0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet



- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------|
| School Districts | E | Proposed Changes |
| A | F | Proposed Precincts |
| B | G | Current Precincts |
| C | H | Current Poling Place |
| D | I | |

Data Sources:
 Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria.
 Precinct Boundaries - 2000 Census Precincts, Virginia State Board of Elections - Alexandria County Precincts.
 This map was produced by the U.S. Section of the Planning and Zoning Department, City of Alexandria.

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Proposed School Districts - Option 11
April, 2002

0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

Legend

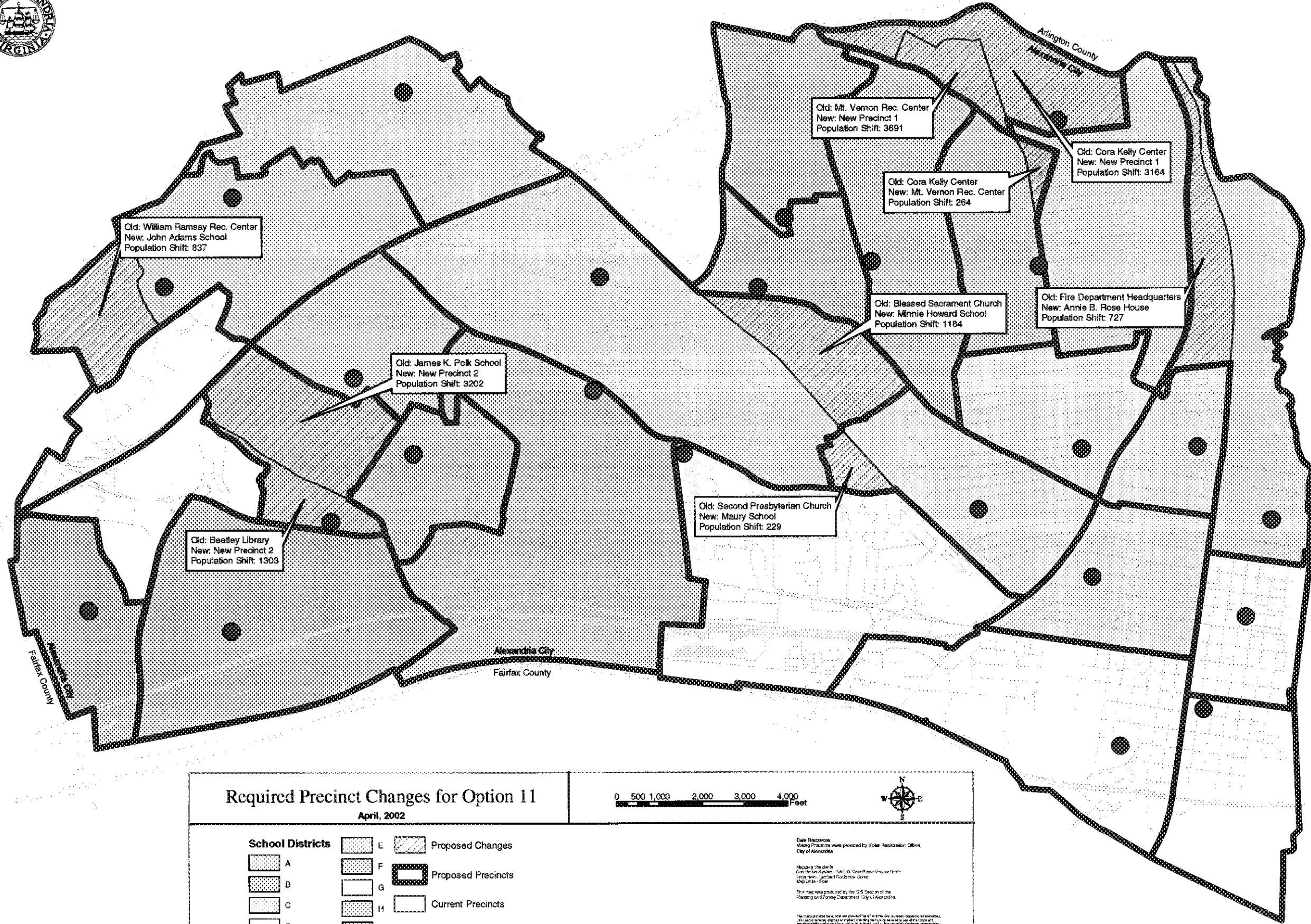
A	D	G	White Population Over 18	1234 Total Population
B	E	H	Minority Population Over 18	1234 Population Deviation
C	F	I		

Data Resources:
Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria.

Mapping Standards:
Color: Adobe Swatch - NAUTICAL Blue; Frame: Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal, Conic; Map Units - Feet.

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Old: William Flansay Rec. Center
New: John Adams School
Population Shift: 837

Old: James K. Polk School
New: New Precinct 2
Population Shift: 3202

Old: Beatley Library
New: New Precinct 2
Population Shift: 1303

Old: Mt. Vernon Rec. Center
New: New Precinct 1
Population Shift: 3691

Old: Cora Kelly Center
New: Mt. Vernon Rec. Center
Population Shift: 264

Old: Cora Kelly Center
New: New Precinct 1
Population Shift: 3164

Old: Blessed Sacrament Church
New: Minnie Howard School
Population Shift: 1184

Old: Fire Department Headquarters
New: Annie B. Rose House
Population Shift: 727

Old: Second Presbyterian Church
New: Maury School
Population Shift: 229

Required Precinct Changes for Option 11

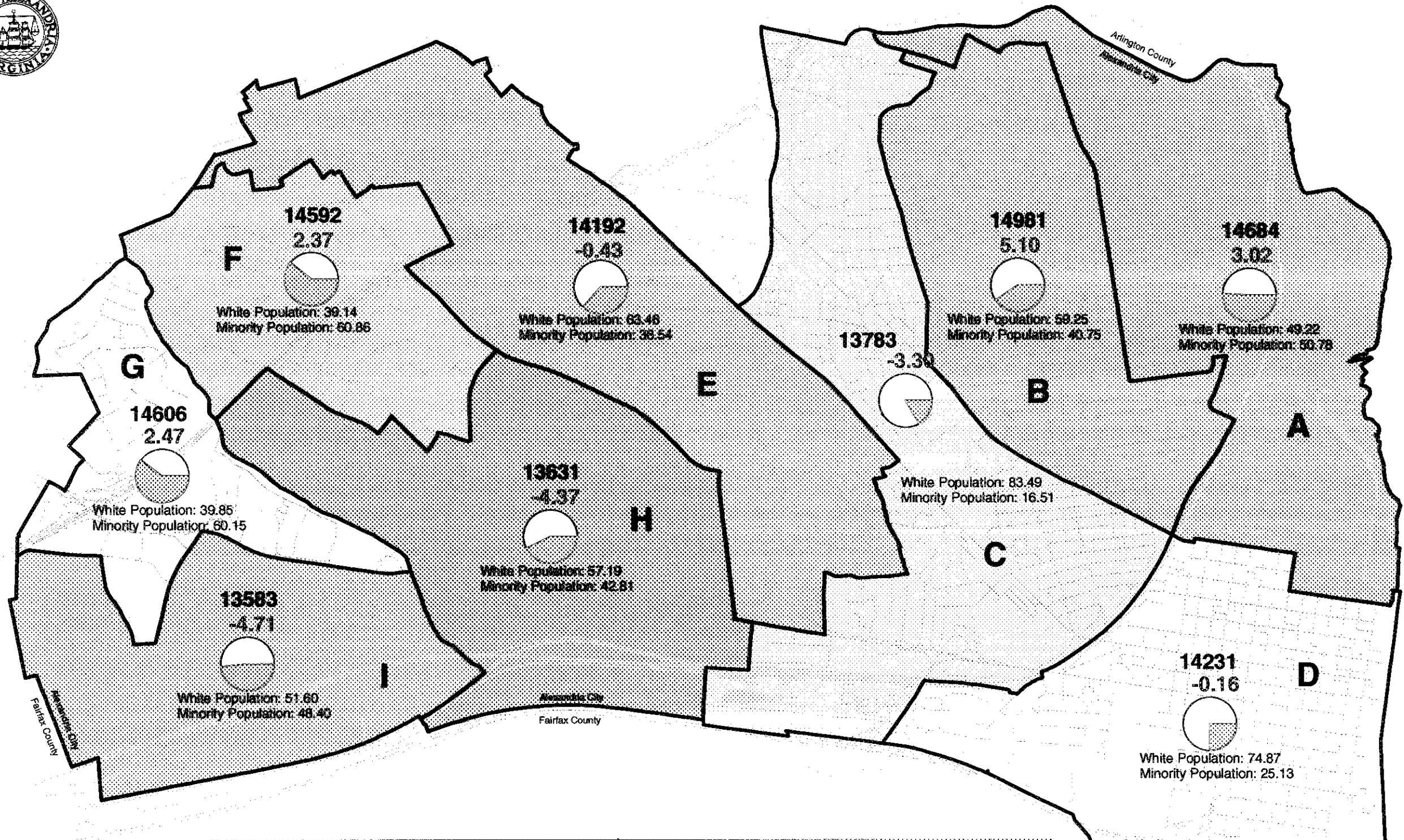
April, 2002

0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet



- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| School Districts | E | Proposed Changes |
| A | F | Proposed Precincts |
| B | G | Current Precincts |
| C | H | Current Polling Place |
| D | I | |

Data Sources:
 Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria.
 Mapping: The City of Alexandria, GIS Department.
 This map was produced by the GIS Section of the Planning and Zoning Department, City of Alexandria.



Proposed School Districts - Option 12
April, 2002

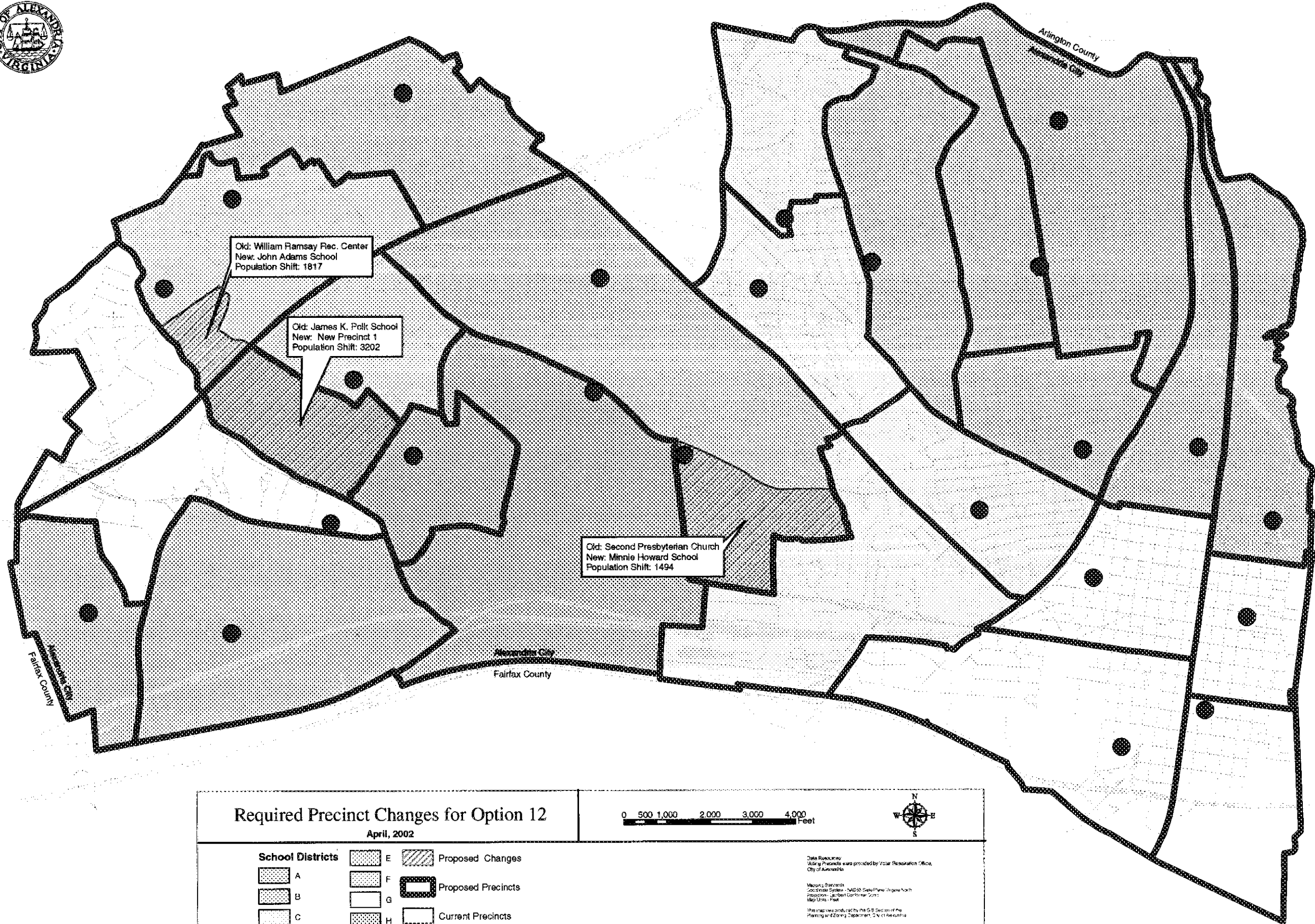
0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

Legend

A	D	G	White Population Over 18 1234 Total Population Minority Population Over 18 1234 Population Deviation
B	E	H	
C	F	I	

Data Provided: Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registrar Office, City of Alexandria.
Map Data Provided: Coordinates: StatePlane - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North; Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic; Map Units - Feet.
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RIVER POTOMAC

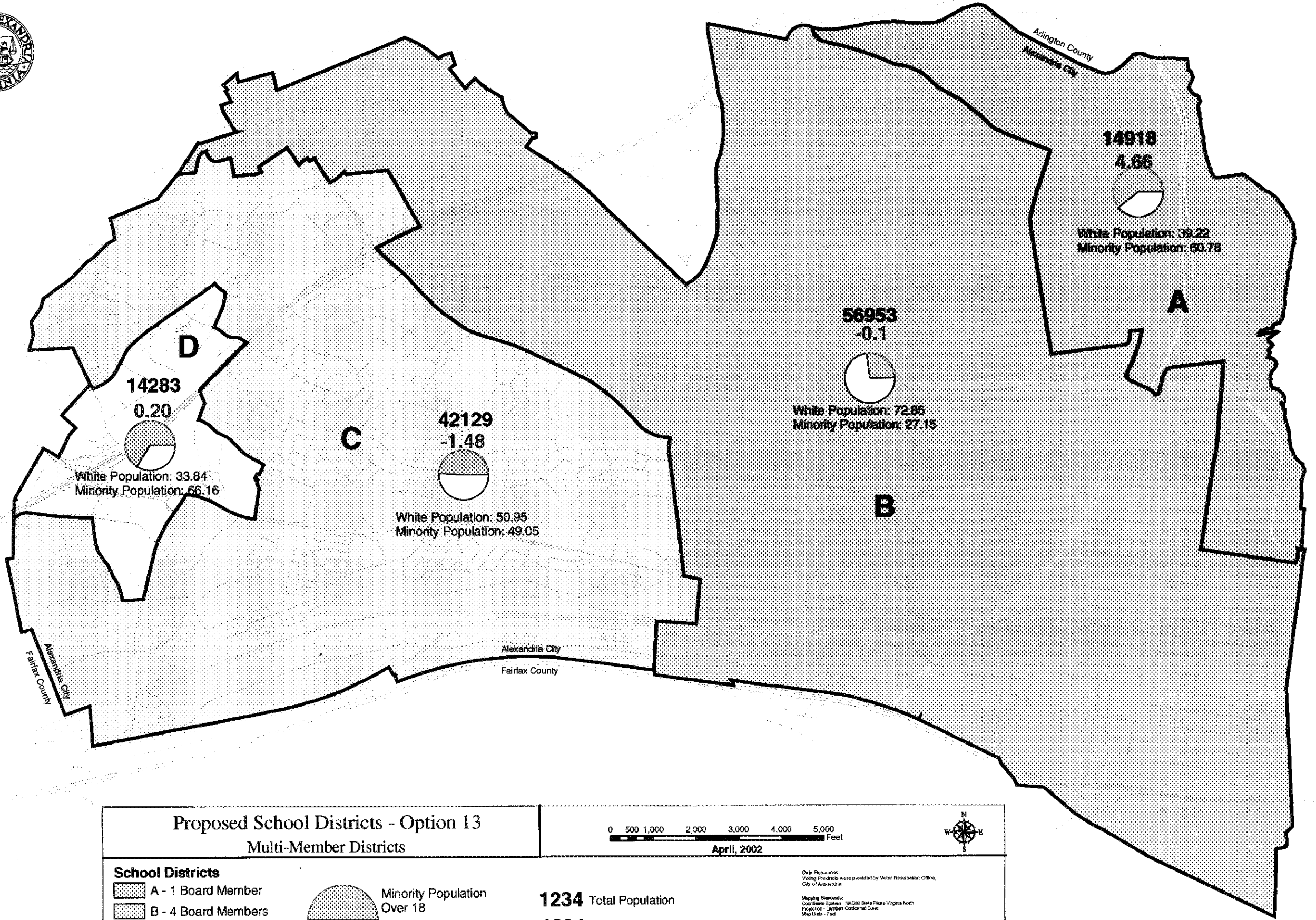


Required Precinct Changes for Option 12
April, 2002

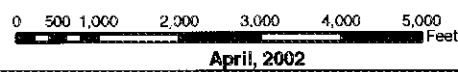
0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

	A		E		Proposed Changes
	B		F		Proposed Precincts
	C		G		Current Precincts
	D		H		Current Polling Place
			I		

Date Revising: Voting Precincts were provided by Total Registration Office, City of Alexandria.
 Mapping Standards: CAD/CADD System - NAD 83 Data Plane, Original North Projection, 1/8" = 100' Coordinate System.
 Map Units - Feet.
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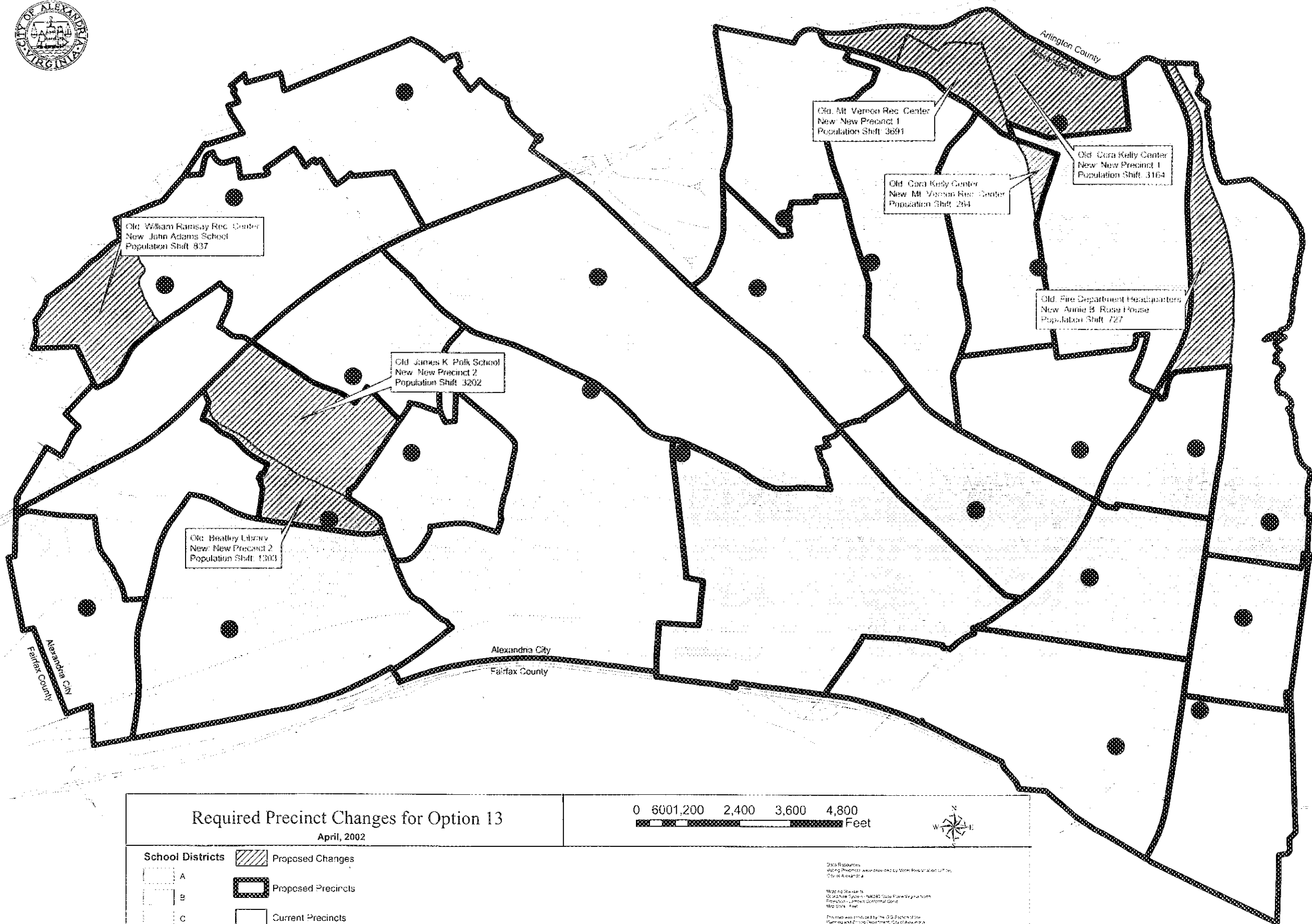
Proposed School Districts - Option 13
Multi-Member Districts



- School Districts**
- A - 1 Board Member
 - B - 4 Board Members
 - C - 3 Board Members
 - D - 1 Board Member
- Minority Population Over 18
- White Population Over 18

1234 Total Population
1234 Population Deviation

Date Resolutions: Voting Precincts were provided by Water Resolutions Office, City of Alexandria.
Mapping Standards: Coordinate System: NAD83 State Plane Virginia North Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic; Map Units: Feet.
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Required Precinct Changes for Option 13

April, 2002

0 600 1,200 2,400 3,600 4,800 Feet



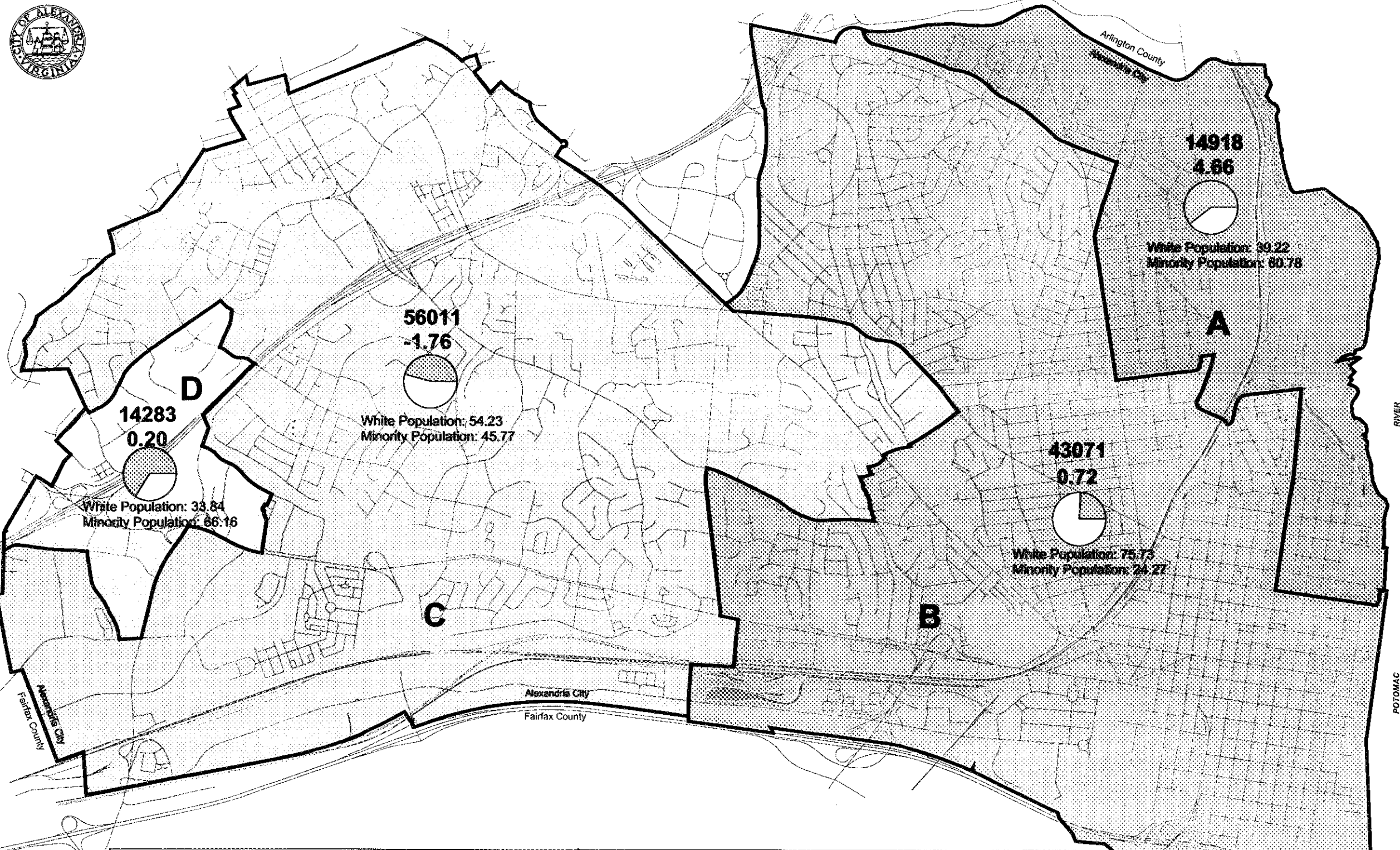
- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| School Districts | Proposed Changes |
| A | Proposed Precincts |
| B | Current Precincts |
| C | Current Polling Place |
| D | |

Data Sources:
 Voting Precincts: 2000 Census by Vote Registration Unit, City of Alexandria

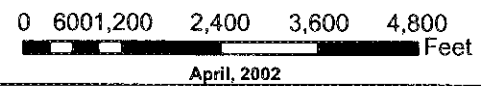
Map of Alexandria
 US State Type: NAD83; State Plane Virginia North
 Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
 Map Units: Feet

This map was produced by the GIS Section of the
 Planning and Zoning Department, City of Alexandria

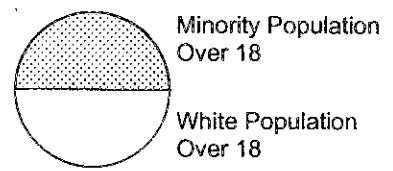
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Proposed School Districts - Option 14
Multi-Member Districts



- School Districts**
- A - 1 Board Member
 - B - 3 Board Members
 - C - 4 Board Members
 - D - 1 Board Member



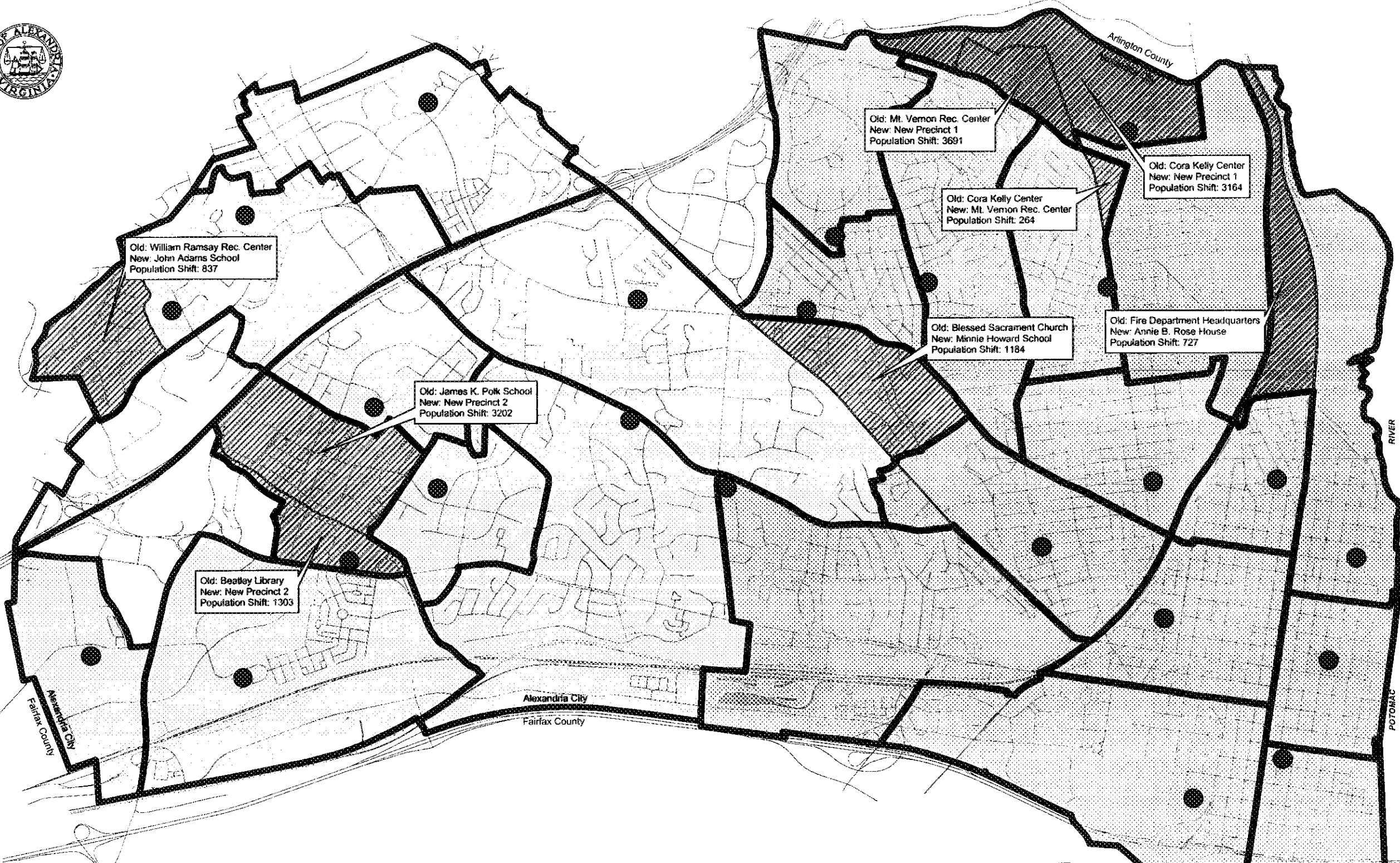
1234 Total Population
1234 Population Deviation

Data Sources:
Using Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office, City of Alexandria

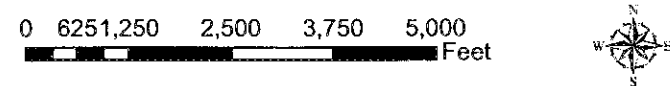
Mapping Standards:
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
Map Units - Feet

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Required Precinct Changes for Option 14
April, 2002



- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| School Districts | Proposed Changes |
| A | Proposed Precincts |
| B | Current Precincts |
| C | Current Polling Place |
| D | |

Mapa Revisada:
Voting Precincts were provided by Voter Registration Office,
City of Alexandria

Mapping Standards:
Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North
Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic
Map Scale - Feet

This map was produced by the GIS Section of the
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ORIGINAL

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5-14-02

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**PUBLIC MEETING CONCERNING
NOTICE OF PROPOSED SCHOOL BOARD REDISTRICTING
and
OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT**

**T.C. Williams High School
Mini Auditorium
King Street
Alexandria, Virginia
April 3, 2002**

BCH-02.58

**Anita B. Glover & Associates, Ltd.
10521 West Drive
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
(703) 591-3004**

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 (Whereupon, at approximately 7:35 o'clock
3 p.m., the public meeting was called to order by Ignacio B.
4 Pessoa, City Attorney, City of Alexandria, Virginia, and
5 the following comments were made.)

6 MR. PESSOA: Good evening, it's a little
7 past 7:30, and so I think we should get started here. My
8 name is Ignacio Pessoa, I'm the city attorney for
9 Alexandria, and I'd like to welcome you to our
10 presentation on the options for the school board
11 redistricting.

12 Before I start, I'd like to talk a little
13 bit about the process that we're going to go through
14 tonight. First of all, we'll have a presentation of the
15 various options that were shown to the school board, the
16 city council and the electoral board some months ago.
17 Those are also available on the poster boards that are
18 set up around the room.

19 I'm going to briefly describe the process
20 for the redistricting, talk a little bit about the
21 options, and then if there are any questions, I'll try
22 and answer some questions. After that portion of the
23 presentation, we'll have a court reporter here who will

1 be set up over here at this table, and if anyone would
2 like to make comments for the record about any of the
3 options, or suggest new options, or about the process,
4 I'd ask you to come see the court reporter and make sure
5 and give your name and address at the beginning of your
6 comments, and then the court reporter will take your
7 comments down and we'll have that transcribed, and that
8 will all be made available for city council when staff
9 prepares a report.

10 The schedule that we're on for the school
11 board redistricting, starting of course with the
12 community meeting today, you can also submit written
13 comments to my office if you want on the school board
14 redistricting process. There's a letter which is
15 available which tells you how to do that. You can do it
16 in writing or through e-mail.

17 I would ask that all comments be presented
18 by April the 26th. The staff is intending to prepare a
19 report for city council on May 14th, to present to
20 council. On May 28th, the schedule is for council to
21 have a public hearing on the report, and to select a
22 preferred option. Then in June of 2002, we'll go through
23 the process of adopting an ordinance to implement

1 whatever the option is, and we're looking to final
2 passage of the ordinance on June 25th, 2002.

3 After the ordinance is adopted, it has to
4 go to the Department of Justice for 60 days before it can
5 be implemented, and we're trying to adhere to that
6 schedule so that we have the new districts in place in
7 time for the May 2003 general election, which will be the
8 next school board election. And we need some lead time,
9 obviously the electoral board has to notify the voters of
10 their new districts and take care of those other
11 administrative processes.

12 So that's the time frame that we're on.
13 I'm going to talk a little bit about the process of doing
14 the redistricting. It is the responsibility of the city
15 council to adopt ordinances, to establish the school
16 board districts. That's a provision of our city charter.
17 I see Councilwoman Pepper has just joined us. That is
18 council's responsibility, as I said. And the time frame
19 as I mentioned is for the May 2003 election, where we
20 have to have the new districts in place.

21 There are some general legal standards
22 that the council will have to adhere to in drawing these
23 new districts. The first and foremost among those is the

1 one person-one vote requirement of the constitution, and
2 basically that says that the districts have to be within
3 plus or minus five percent of the total population
4 between districts, so that the largest district can be no
5 more or less than a total of ten percent of the smallest
6 district.

7 The requirement is that the districts be
8 compact and contiguous. You probably saw a little bit
9 about those factors talked about with respect to the
10 state redistricting. Basically, they have to reflect
11 natural boundaries, be a sort of a regular geographic
12 unit, and if you depart from that, you have to have a
13 very good reason for departing from that. I see
14 Councilwoman Eberwine also has just joined us.

15 The districts have to follow clearly
16 observable boundaries, or census blocks. The rule in
17 Virginia is that we have voting precincts, as you all
18 know, where people go to exercise the franchise. We have
19 to have the districts comprised of voting precincts. In
20 other words, we can't take the Mt. Vernon precinct and
21 divide it between two districts, for example. One
22 precinct has to be entirely contained within a district.

23 Another criteria for creating districts is

1 to protect communities of interest, and this is a very
2 broadly defined term. It relates in this context
3 certainly to school attendance areas, to housing types,
4 to those social and community facilities around which
5 society is organized. The redistricting is an inherently
6 political process, and the body that's doing the
7 redistricting can look at protecting incumbents or
8 discouraging incumbents, opening up slots for new
9 contests.

10 I mentioned that we can't split the
11 precincts, and then there are really two federal law
12 aspects that govern what the city does, because
13 Alexandria, being in Virginia and being in a southern
14 state, is subject to section five of the Voting Rights
15 Act, which basically requires that the city, before we
16 implement a new district, submit the plan to the
17 Department of Justice. The department then has 60 days
18 in which to review it, to determine whether or not there
19 is any, what the law calls retrogression, or a
20 retrogression in the position of minority groups in being
21 able to effectively participate in the electoral process.

22 That analysis looks at the benchmark
23 today, the existing conditions, the existing districts,

1 and the existing census data, and the test there is that
2 there is no worsening of minority voting strength. And
3 under section five, the city has the affirmative burden
4 to show that that's the case, that we meet the
5 requirements of section five of the act.

6 The other aspect of the Voting Rights Act
7 is section two, which the city also has to comply with,
8 although the process there is a little different. The
9 test under section two is, do the local practices result
10 in minority voters having less opportunity than other
11 members of the electorate to participate in the political
12 process and to elect representatives of their choice.
13 And there are a couple of factors that go into answering
14 that question, whether the minority group is sufficiently
15 large and geographically compact as to form a majority in
16 a district; whether the group is politically cohesive;
17 whether there is a history of racially polarized voting.
18 In other words, is there a history that shows that the
19 majority block voting defeats the electoral success of
20 minority candidates. And I think we're very fortunate in
21 Alexandria that at least in contemporary times we don't
22 have any history of racially polarized block voting in
23 our elections.

1 But unlike section five, section two of
2 the Voting Rights Act, the burden of proof is on someone
3 who wants to challenge the new plan that ultimately is
4 adopted, to go to court and to show that it violates the
5 act. So there is a separate process there from section
6 five of the Voting Rights Act.

7 If we can turn now quickly to the various
8 options that staff have prepared, I want to begin by
9 saying that these are not recommended options in any
10 sense. Staff looked at the existing districts, which is,
11 if you can go back one slide to the existing condition;
12 yeah, the existing condition, as you know, the city is
13 divided into three districts, sort of on a moving from
14 the east to the west. The historic pattern of
15 development of the city. And those are the, that's the
16 benchmark, that is the existing condition, the existing
17 demographic characteristics for voters 18 years of age,
18 or excuse me, citizens, residents 18 years of age and
19 older. And as I mentioned earlier, the districts have to
20 be in plus or minus ten percent of each other. You can
21 see that district C at 20 percent above the ideal
22 population is way too large, and district B in the middle
23 is too small, and district A at minus five percent of the

1 ideal population for a district is within tolerances.

2 So that establishes the benchmark, or the
3 existing conditions that we're working from, and if you
4 can go to the next slide now; option one makes the fewest
5 changes to the existing condition; it changes one
6 district in the west, which is the Polk district goes
7 from C, the Polk precinct, excuse me, goes from district
8 C into district B, and this one change is sufficient to
9 bring the numbers within the one person-one vote
10 constraints that the city has to work in. And as I said,
11 that makes the least change from the existing condition.
12 Next slide, please.

13 Option two moves the NOVA Art Center
14 Precinct from B to C, and the Tucker School, Polk School
15 and Patrick Henry Schools from C to B, so that makes four
16 changes there on the west side, and then on the east side
17 of the city it moves George Mason Precinct from B to A in
18 order to offset the increase in these populations, so we
19 start to see more radical, if you will, shifting in the
20 existing alignment of the districts.

21 And by the way, as I said, these maps are
22 displayed around the room. The existing conditions are
23 back there, and then the options circulate around and end

1 up, that's option one there, and option eight there by
2 the audio station. Next slide, please.

3 Option three makes two changes, one on the
4 west and one on the east. John Adams moves from C to B,
5 and George Mason moves from B to A on the east side of
6 the city. Option four, if you could go to the next
7 slide, please, option four also makes two changes, one on
8 the west and one on the east. The same John Adams
9 precinct moves from C to B, but on the east, Agudas Achim
10 moves from B to A as opposed to George Mason. And that,
11 just as an aside, that's an illustration of about the
12 limits of compact and contiguous. You can see that there
13 is a connection between Agudas Achim and the rest of the
14 district that's substantial enough that we would say that
15 that configuration is compact and contiguous, but that's
16 about the limit of compactness and contiguity.

17 The next three options, if you can go
18 quickly through the next slides, five, six and seven, are
19 a little bit different. The existing condition divides
20 the city starting in the east, a center section and a
21 western section. Five, six and seven attempt, in some
22 fashion, instead of going east to west, to divide the
23 city north to south as best as can be done given the

1 requirement that we adhere to, existing voting precincts,
2 in creating the new districts.

3 Because this is a completely different
4 electoral structure, a large number of precincts are
5 shifted from the existing districts where they are
6 located. And then if you can go to slide eight, slide
7 eight is sort of a hybrid between the two approaches,
8 which was proposed at the work session on the
9 redistricting with the council and the school board and
10 the electoral board.

11 A remains pretty much the same in the
12 east, except for the inclusion of the George Mason
13 Precinct in A, whereas formerly it was in B. And then B
14 and C attempt sort of a north-south division as well,
15 that reflects a new alignment in the western part of the
16 city.

17 As I said, these are only options
18 suggested for consideration. Neither the council, the
19 school board, the electoral board or staff have
20 recommended any plan over the others. And the community
21 is free to suggest other plans which meet the
22 requirements for the legal standards for redistricting,
23 and we'll certainly include those plans in our report to

1 the city council.

2 So that is basically the presentation that
3 we gave to the work session. If there are any questions,
4 I'd be glad to entertain any questions at this point.

5 A PARTICIPANT: Good evening. I've just
6 noted that all eight options are three. Is there any
7 prohibition against having more than three districts?

8 MR. PESSOA: No, there is not. Under the
9 city charter, council can establish any number of
10 districts for election of the school board members. Of
11 course we have nine school board members, and three
12 districts with three members each, ^{FITS} ~~sits~~, so to speak.

13 If you were to depart from that, certainly
14 you could do nine districts with one member, if you can,
15 you know, meet all the other standards. But apart from
16 those two choices, then, you have districts that elect
17 different numbers of members. And as long as the one
18 person-one vote criteria is met, you can do that.

19 But the discussion up to date has been
20 two-fold. One is to adhere to the existing voting
21 precincts in building the districts, because they were
22 recently realigned for the 2000 census overall,
23 redistricting for the state offices, and there is a

1 certain feeling that people get used to voting at a
2 certain place, that when you start shifting precinct
3 lines and moving voting, polling places, that that
4 adversely ^{AFFECTS} ~~effects~~ voter turnout and voter participation.

5 So that was the one thing that staff sort
6 of kept in mind in suggesting these options. The other
7 was to adhere to the three-three-three structure of the
8 present school board, simply because the thought was that
9 going to nine districts possibly would ^{BACKANIZE} ~~vulcanize~~ the
10 election process for school board members. And anything
11 else then introduces some unusual complexity, that in
12 other words voters in one district are voting for three
13 people, voters in another district are voting for two
14 people; the thought was that that has the potential at
15 least, or the perception is there that the districts that
16 have more members have more clout, have more say in the
17 process, than the districts that have fewer members.

18 As I said, under federal constitutional
19 law, that is a permissible outcome as long as the
20 numbers, basically, you know, a one person district can
21 have half the number of voters, of residents, citizens in
22 it, as a two-person district or, so that you keep the
23 proportionality.

1 I'm sorry, there was a question over there
2 that was next.

3 A PARTICIPANT: Are all these considered
4 to meet the criterias you laid out when you started
5 talking?

6 MR. PESSOA: Yes, all eight of these
7 districts certainly as to the one person- one vote
8 criteria, that's the numbers that are indicated there.
9 And in terms of retrogression, in general I would say
10 these do meet the Voting Rights Act overall, you know,
11 there are minor changes between, in the composition of
12 the various districts in each scheme, but overall there
13 does not appear to be retrogression. Yes.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Sort of a brief follow-up
15 to the first question. Is it possible to have, for
16 example, four districts of two each and one like an at-
17 large across the city?

18 MR. PESSOA: The charter talks about
19 districts. If you did -- and there had been some
20 discussion about going to such a scheme with the chairman
21 of the school board elected at-large. That requires a
22 charter change in order to implement.

23 A PARTICIPANT: Also in answering the

1 first question, you had raised the issue about the
2 precinct boundaries which were revised last year to
3 update the 2000 census. Are those precinct boundaries
4 open to being modified?

5 MR. PESSOA: We could modify the precinct
6 boundaries as part of this process. The decision, as I
7 said, was not to recommend that or not to put, include
8 that, rather, in the options because they had just been
9 adjusted. And it's not, let me just say in defense of
10 the process, it's not an easy task to come up with the
11 precinct lines and find a suitable voting place within
12 each precinct. The electoral board spent a great deal of
13 effort doing that, and the perception is there is a
14 comfort level with that status quo, and that's why none
15 of these options attempt to address that.

16 A PARTICIPANT: Let me comment that as a
17 voter whose place was changed and therefore was
18 disenfranchised in the recent special election, there is
19 a great discomfort factor amongst myself and many of my
20 fellow citizens about that re-precincting process, which
21 had virtually no public contrary input.

22 MR. PESSOA: Well, I know that in terms of
23 the past election that there was some concern about the

1 shift up there in the NOVA Arts Center Precinct between,
2 the boundary between B and C. But the state law is that
3 when you do these -- because inevitably when the 2000,
4 the decennial census occurs, these issues are going to
5 come up -- the state law is that if a vacancy occurs, you
6 conduct the election in the district which most closely
7 resembles the district from which the member who resigned
8 or retired or departed service, whatever, was elected
9 from. And in that case, that was district C with the new
10 boundary.

11 So I understand, and I sympathize that
12 there were people who felt disenfranchised, but in the
13 context of, you know, adapting to the new census data,
14 that happened here in Alexandria, it happened on the
15 state senatorial districts elsewhere in the state, where
16 senators were elected from districts and as a result
17 people had no opportunity to vote for a current member of
18 the senate of Virginia because of the redistricting.

19 Any other questions?

20 A PARTICIPANT: Can you go over how the
21 incumbents might be affected in each of the scenarios?

22 MR. PESSOA: Candidly, I do not have that
23 data. Because you know, as I said, that's a political

1 issue. The staff sort of looked at this in terms of a
2 technical compliance issue. But we can certainly get
3 that for you, and we'll be glad to post it on the web
4 site. All this data, let me add, is available on the
5 city's web site. We'll certainly generate that data and
6 put a map on the web site with that information.

7 A PARTICIPANT: Wouldn't it be helpful to
8 have each one of these maps show where the incumbents
9 reside on each of them?

10 MR. PESSOA: Yeah, we can certainly add
11 that in as a part of the information that's on the web
12 site.

13 A PARTICIPANT: At one point we discussed
14 having information as to not just how many people live in
15 a district, but how many people vote in the local
16 elections in these districts. Is that information --

17 MR. PESSOA: Well, certainly that
18 information, both in terms of registered voters, is
19 available, and I suppose in terms of turn-out in the past
20 elections is likewise available. We can certainly
21 include that in what's available on the web site. The
22 only caution there is that in terms of the Voting Rights
23 Act, in terms of the one person-one vote requirement, we

1 need to look at the total population and the voting age
2 population, not the actual registered voters and actual
3 turn-outs.

4 A PARTICIPANT: I realize that, but to all
5 these scenarios meet the voting rights requirements in
6 order to distinguish between them, knowing the turn-out
7 in your average local elections would be helpful, I would
8 think. An extremely low turnout versus one that has an
9 extremely high turn-out.

10 MR. PESSOA: Well, you know, that's a
11 valid point. The data is there and we'll be glad to make
12 it available. Oh, I'm sorry, Councilman ^{Guille} ~~Ewell~~, I didn't
13 see you come in earlier.

14 A PARTICIPANT: Is there an overriding
15 theme to the redistricting approach, other than the fact
16 that this needs to happen; I mean what is the significant
17 goal to be accomplished, if any?

18 MR. PESSOA: Well, I mean the basic goal
19 here is to redraw the districts to comply with the one
20 person-one vote, and section five analysis, in light of
21 the changes, the shifts in the city population that
22 occurred as a result over the last ten years. As the
23 initial slide -- can you go back to the initial slide,

1 the original conditions?

2 As the initial slide shows, district C has
3 gotten too large. The limit is basically ten percent
4 total discrepancy between the largest and the smallest
5 district. District C at 20 percent is too large, and
6 district B at 15 percent under is too small, and before
7 the May 2003 election, the city has to adjust that to
8 bring that into a total of ten percent, or plus or minus
9 five percent. Sir?

10 A PARTICIPANT: The maps over there I
11 think are very useful tools, and having them on the web
12 site is very helpful. But I was struck when I went to
13 the web site initially and looked at them, that the one
14 that's marked as the current is truly the extremely
15 recent current one, the one that was set up for the
16 special election reflecting the 2000 precincts.

17 Do you have a map that shows the
18 boundaries and the data for when the original election
19 was held, and the previous election, what those
20 boundaries were and what the data are?

21 MR. PESSOA: We do, you know, we can
22 certainly generate that if we don't have -- we have the
23 data, we don't have a map that I'm aware of currently

1 that shows that, but we can certainly generate that, and
2 if you would like, we'll add that to the web site as
3 well. That would be the condition prior to the June re-
4 precincting.

5 A PARTICIPANT: Can you draw a map of nine
6 districts --

7 MR. PESSOA: I mean technically,
8 certainly. We can do that. I'm not sure that given the
9 existing precincts that the numbers would work, but
10 certainly we can attempt that. My intuition tells me
11 that doing that probably would result in having to adjust
12 the precinct lines, if we were to go to a nine-district
13 system, because we wouldn't be within tolerances with the
14 existing precincts. But technically we do have the
15 ability to do that.

16 A PARTICIPANT: I guess my other question
17 is, are you going to do it.

18 MR. PESSOA: I'm sorry?

19 A PARTICIPANT: Are you going to do it?

20 MR. PESSOA: Certainly, if, you know, the
21 result of this comment session is that there is desire
22 that we do that, we'll attempt to do it, and we'll see
23 what the result is using the existing precincts. Once we

1 start, once we depart from that, I mean, you know, there
2 is a finite number of precincts and combinations, if we
3 use the existing precincts, that technically it's doable.
4 Once you break down from the precept that you're going to
5 adhere to the existing precincts, then the possibilities
6 are infinite, and so certainly in the time frame that we
7 have, we can do it with, or attempt to do it, with the
8 existing precincts. And we'll, if that's one of the
9 comments, we'll certainly try that. Sir?

10 A PARTICIPANT: I'm interested in the nine
11 districts area as well. My real question is, will staff
12 make a recommendation to the council at some point?

13 MR. PESSOA: After closing the comment
14 period, after we've examined the comments and digested
15 the comments, staff will be making a recommendation to
16 council, yes.

17 A PARTICIPANT: I guess my question is,
18 how much of your recommendation will be weighted on
19 citizens' comments?

20 MR. PESSOA: Well, I mean that's certainly
21 one factor. Another factor is the legal requirements.
22 One factor is the electoral board's view of the
23 practicality of the scheme for conducting elections. But

1 yes, I mean that's why we are here today, to solicit
2 citizen input. There will be opportunities for public
3 hearing before the council when this comes on for
4 consideration, so as with most things in the city, at
5 least I like to think that the citizen input will have a
6 large role in shaping the staff recommendation. There
7 was one more question down here?

8 A PARTICIPANT: Is there a factor that can
9 be put in about future growth; in other words, between
10 1990 and 2000, huge changes and shifts took place, and I
11 know that the city is more built up because of capacity
12 or whatever than it was in 1990, but will it be not more
13 something that reflects today and the past, reflects
14 today and the future --

15 MR. PESSOA: The answer to that is really
16 two-fold. We have to adhere to the, using the existing
17 2000 census data; we have to adhere to the, you know,
18 plus or minus five percent, ten percent total disparity,
19 again, if we're talking about the disparity between
20 districts. But we can certainly adjust the smaller
21 districts, if council wants to go that route, so that the
22 smaller districts take in the areas of the city where
23 more growth is forecast. And if you'd note, I mean when

1 staff discussions about it have really focused on the
2 Potomac Yard as an area of more residents, and parts of
3 the Eisenhower Valley, some of the plans do have, I think
4 it's actually option one, I can't see the numbers from
5 here, do have the A district, which would contain the
6 Potomac Yard area, as under-represented today, so that it
7 could accommodate some growth over the ensuing ten-year
8 period.

9 A PARTICIPANT: To answer the question,
10 electing a chairperson at large, would you also have to
11 have a two-person district and three at-large members?

12 MR. PESSOA: If you have the chairman at-
13 large, a member at-large but not the chairman?

14 A PARTICIPANT: Yes.

15 MR. PESSOA: The way the charter is set
16 up, it contemplates that all the members come from
17 districts within the city, not from the city at-large.
18 And just a little history on that, you might not get that
19 reading the language of the charter directly, because it
20 says from districts, and maybe you could have one at-
21 large district. But if you look at the genesis of that,
22 how it developed over time and how the charter differs
23 from the general law for school boards, elected school

1 boards that applies elsewhere in Virginia, it seems to me
2 that the better view is that you could not elect one
3 member from a district that was city-wide. That that's
4 not the type of district that the charter contemplates.

5 A PARTICIPANT: Should there be some
6 concern about, not necessarily where the population, how
7 you divide the population within whatever number of
8 districts city-wide, but in actuality where those with
9 children in the public school system reside?

10 MR. PESSOA: Well, again --

11 A PARTICIPANT: Take district A, for
12 instance. I mean, you know, a lot of that covers Old
13 Town. There are not a lot of people in Old Town with
14 kids in our public schools. So again, you know, they're
15 tax payers and voters, and they have a right to have a
16 say in the governing process, but should there be a
17 concern that's placed on ensuring that people that have
18 kids in the public school system are fairly represented?

19 MR. PESSOA: Yes, if we can do that within
20 the constraints of the one person-one vote. This is
21 first and foremost an electoral process. It has to meet
22 the one person-one vote parameters. And if it does that,
23 then there are a host of other factors, community of

1 interest, having children in the school system certainly
2 is a legitimate factor, but that cannot override the
3 electoral one person-one vote requirement. Sir?

4 A PARTICIPANT: I have a question about
5 the schedule, the -- let me back up by asking the
6 question this way: Have these materials been distributed
7 to the various civic associations in the city?

8 MR. PESSOA: Yes. The letter that I sent
9 out dated -- my copy doesn't have a date, but it was
10 about two weeks ago, I think. 15 March letter was
11 distributed using the city's list of all civic
12 associations, citizens groups, interest groups, as
13 broadly as possible. It was also docketed at that time,
14 or shortly before that it was on the docket, so the
15 information that was out there in abbreviated form was
16 also sent to all the docket subscribers.

17 A PARTICIPANT: My suggestion would be
18 that another couple of weeks might help the various civic
19 associations to meet about this and respond back to you
20 with either new plans or comments on it. It's going to
21 be tough, I think, for all of them to hit the deadline
22 where there was roughly a six-week period.

23 MR. PESSOA: Well, the April 26th date was

1 a compromise, trying to give as much time as possible and
2 yet give staff the opportunity to receive the data and
3 collate it and come up with a report for council. So
4 that's why we adopted the April 26th deadline.

5 That's not the end of the comment period.
6 There will still be a public hearing before council on
7 the staff report, a public hearing on the ordinance, so
8 even though that's the internal deadline for the staff
9 report, it's by no means the deadline for public citizen
10 input into the process and the outcome.

11 A PARTICIPANT: The words by staff, who is
12 staff in this, who will have a plan and a decision, a
13 recommendation --

14 MR. PESSOA: In making the recommendation
15 to council it will basically be myself and the city
16 manager, and with the GIS staff. I want to say the GIS
17 staff has been very helpful in collating the data and in
18 generating the maps. But that will be the ultimate --

19 A PARTICIPANT: Is there any reason why
20 it's so limited and restricted to just the two of you?

21 MR. PESSOA: Well, I mean that encompasses
22 -- when I say the two of us, I mean the manager has a
23 staff, I have staff, that's the format that it will take.

1 But other employees within the city will certainly
2 participate in that.

3 A PARTICIPANT: I'm not belittling your
4 roles, but you know, when you say staff it sounds broad,
5 and -- other entities have an interest. The electoral
6 board and the school system in addition to the city. And
7 I'm wondering when you say staff, are there individual
8 representatives from those entities that are part of the
9 process that are considered staff.

10 MR. PESSOA: Well, I think as I said
11 earlier, this is really a council decision. And so
12 council staff are the manager, the city attorney and the
13 clerk's office. So the role for those other entities
14 certainly is there, it's to comment and to make
15 suggestions, and just as every other group, that will be
16 taken into consideration. But the ultimate
17 recommendation to council will come from council's direct
18 staff, not from staff of these independent entities.

19 A PARTICIPANT: In your opinion do the
20 proportions of representation --

21 MR. PESSOA: By that, I'm not sure what
22 you mean exactly by proportion of representation. It's
23 taken in two contexts. One is, one district has one

1 member, a district that's twice the size has two members;
2 yes, that can meet the one person-one vote. There are
3 also schemes with cumulative voting, which, yeah,
4 cumulative voting where, you know, people in one district
5 can elect three people, and they can give all their votes
6 to one person, they can give, you know, two to one and
7 one to the other, or one to one. Those schemes are also,
8 do meet the one person-one vote requirement. But again,
9 they're quite unusual. At least in the context of this
10 part of the country, in terms of elections.

11 A PARTICIPANT: (Inaudible.)

12 MR. PESSOA: Well, the gentleman there
13 suggested, and we will do the districts before the June
14 2000 re-precincting. And with the 2000 census data.
15 Because I mean the 2000 census data is what we're faced
16 with using in terms of this process.

17 A PARTICIPANT: (Inaudible.)

18 MR. PESSOA: In other words you're
19 suggesting comparing the 2000 census data with the 1990
20 census data?

21 A PARTICIPANT: Yes.

22 MR. PESSOA: I'll certainly look into
23 seeing if that data from 1990 is available on the GIS to

1 generate another map. If it is, we'll be glad to try and
2 do that for you.

3 A PARTICIPANT: I think it would be
4 logical, depending on what the -- because you're
5 presenting this with the current census, and the old
6 districts. So you need the old districts with the old
7 census.

8 MR. PESSOA: We'll certainly try and
9 provide a map that shows that as well. Any other
10 questions?

11 Okay, if we take a minute or two break to
12 let the court reporter move up here, if anyone wants to
13 come and offer individualized comments to the court
14 reporter, you're welcome to do that. I'll be available
15 to talk one on one, if you want, while that process is
16 ongoing.

17 (Pause.)

18 (Whereupon, further remarks were made by
19 Chester Avery representing the Alexandria Human Rights
20 Commission; the Court Reporter having been moved out of
21 adequate hearing range for those comments was unable to
22 accurately take them down. However, a written statement
23 from the Alexandria Human Rights Commission was presented

1 for inclusion in the transcript.)

2 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

3 OWEN CURTIS: My name is Owen Curtis, I
4 really want to offer two comments, and they both revolve
5 around the issue I think Bill ^{Evilles} ~~Ewell~~ pointed out. And
6 that is the fact that we are doing something that is
7 required by law and the constitution, to abide by the
8 strict population issues, and we need to meet the tests
9 that that Voting Rights Act requires of us.

10 But that flies in the face with the nature
11 of public education in this city. We have a disparate
12 use of public education across the city, and it's -- it
13 divides to some extent upon economic lines, but it also
14 divides -- it doesn't divide, but it reflects the use of
15 public education, and those of us who send our children
16 to the fine schools of the city are not evenly
17 distributed, we're certainly not distributed according to
18 the population.

19 That said, it leads me to the following
20 conclusion. And the conclusion is, once we have met the
21 legal tests that we must meet, of the constitution and
22 the vote, and the protection of the Voting Rights Act, I
23 think that the dominant factor that we should look at

Anita B. Glover & Associates, Ltd.
10521 West Drive
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

* A SEPARATE TRANSCRIPT (703) 591-3004 OF MR. AUCKEY'S
COMMENTS APPEARS AT THE END. 30

1 here is what is referred to as the community of interest.
2 And the community of interest to those of us who are in
3 the public school system, and who have extremely strong
4 interests, and who are -- is really the schools, the
5 schools that we send our children to. What is missing on
6 these maps, and I know that it in itself is an ever-
7 shifting thing, because it needs to meet the needs of
8 different schools, and their particular facilities and
9 their own size requirements, but we really need to
10 overlay each of these as we sit down and review them and
11 finalize our comments on them, with the school boundary
12 districts, the school zones, if that's the proper term,
13 so that we can understand a little bit better how they
14 work.

15 Our children attend John Adams School.
16 With the city's resetting of the precincts last year, a
17 process which certainly was conducted according to law,
18 and unfortunately it wasn't conducted in the normal
19 outreach process that I find that the city follows so
20 well, the civic associations were not informed of it in
21 advance, so unless you are one who subscribes to the
22 docket or somehow otherwise keeps on top of the many
23 various -- there was no public comment. People didn't

1 know there was an issue out there.

2 And consequently after 27 years of voting,
3 I found out two weeks before last fall's election that I
4 had to report -- I couldn't go to -- I had to go over to
5 NOVA Arts Center. And literally, they tore apart the
6 neighborhood that fed into John Adams School, both in our
7 public school program and where we voted.

8 And then we tried to define the zones,
9 according to the new precincts. And half of those of us
10 who used to vote in district C got moved over to district
11 B because we changed precincts. The narrow sense of
12 personal interest is that the NOVA Arts Center and the
13 John Adams Precincts must be part of the same school
14 board district, because we are part of the John Adams
15 community. That is our local school system, that is our
16 community of interest. In looking at it from a simple
17 kind of what's happening in our back yard, our local
18 schools, the local individual neighborhood schools, are
19 included in the same school board district and that we
20 try as much as possible to keep those communities of
21 interest whole, within district A, or within B, or within
22 C, so that we can continue to express ourselves through
23 our elected officials out of the interest of improving

1 the quality of public education. Thank you.

2 GEORGE LAMBERT: I'm strongly supporting
3 that we would at scenarios that would certainly review
4 nine districts, and would sort of like to see what those
5 scenarios would look at. The second thing is I'm very
6 much concerned, with no disrespect to the city attorney,
7 nor to the city manager, but regarding the issue of the
8 weight of citizen input.

9 For example, and this is really a question
10 in terms of I guess both the city manager and the city
11 attorney will listen to the for example, my organization
12 represents a number of persons who have children in the
13 school system. So when I weigh in on this issue, it's
14 just not George Lambert, one individual weighing in, it's
15 George Lambert for Northern Virginia Urban League
16 weighing in for a number of persons who have a vested
17 interest in the school system.

18 Those are my comments. Thank you very
19 much.

20 PATRICIA A. BROUSSARD: I'm Patricia A.
21 Broussard. And I'd like to say that I am in favor of at
22 least taking a look at the nine school districts, I think
23 because, yes, the nine school districts, and I would like

1 to see the city work up a couple of scenarios, with all
2 due respect, I think because we currently have a magnet
3 school and we also have two focus schools where students
4 come from all over the city, I think that kind of moots
5 the point that was made about this whole community
6 interest.

7 The community interest that we have is in
8 all of the schools within the whole system, but I think
9 it's a fairer process, it involves the people who are
10 right there with their finger on the pulse if you have
11 nine school districts. I support it, I hope we look at
12 it at least, talk about it, and I'm very concerned that
13 we don't dismiss it out of hand simply because, quote, it
14 may be too difficult to implement. And I thank you.

15 HOWARD WOODSON: My name is Howard
16 Woodson. I'm president of the Alexandria NAACP, and I
17 just wanted to make a comment on the remarks that have
18 been made by the Human Rights Commission, wherein they
19 have endorsed a scenario to have nine districts set up,
20 the idea being that it ensures better participation and
21 better representation from the various communities in the
22 city.

23 I believe that the NAACP would go on

1 record to supporting that type of concept, in that it may
2 assure us of having representatives of the community that
3 composes the majority of the school system, which are
4 minorities. I think that's a very important concept, and
5 it would reflect what we had before, elected school
6 boards, where he had appointed school boards, and that
7 being that we had more minority representation, which
8 more fairly reflects the school population itself.

9 And so at some point, I guess in this
10 public comment period, we will be making a formal
11 statement to go on record as endorsing the nine district
12 school district set-up. Thank you.

13 CAMERON BARRON: I just wanted to say that
14 it is important for the City of Alexandria to actually be
15 a little more creative in looking at various options. A
16 couple that are being discussed among some of the folks
17 that I'm working with at the support committee is one,
18 cumulative voting, which would sort of enable people to
19 vote in a way that, again, so that it represents their
20 interest, that they are particularly strong about a
21 particular candidate, which I think reflects some of the
22 history in Alexandria.

23 But the second thing is that the options


1 that are being presented really aren't, they don't really
2 represent any sort of, any real options. I mean just in
3 terms of keeping the precincts the way that they are
4 instead of shifting around current boundaries doesn't
5 actually represent anything new. And I think that it
6 would be important to take this interest and just start
7 with the first approach, meaning looking at the city as a
8 whole and saying what makes sense.

9 I mean there's been proposals of nine
10 districts. That's one way to approach the issue. But
11 there are also others as well. So that's it, thank you.

12 (Whereupon, no further public comments
13 were offered for this record.)
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23

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

1
2 I, B. CHARLES HOPCHAS, a certified
3 verbatim court reporter and a notary public in and for
4 the Commonwealth of Virginia at large, the officer before
5 whom the foregoing comments was taken, do hereby certify
6 that the comments appearing in the foregoing public
7 meeting was taken by me by Stenomask and thereafter
8 reduced to typewriting under my direction; that said
9 transcript is a true record of the comments given to the
10 best of my knowledge and ability; that I am neither
11 counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the
12 parties to the action in which this hearing was taken;
13 and further, that I am not a relative or employee of any
14 attorney or counsel employed by the parties thereto; nor
15 financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the
16 action.

17 
18 B. CHARLES HOPCHAS, CVR
19 Notary Public in and for the
Commonwealth of Virginia at
large.

20 My commission expires: February 28, 2006
21
22
23

**STATEMENT OF THE ALEXANDRIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
ON THE ELECTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD
GIVEN BEFORE THE COMMUNITY MEETING ON REDISTRICTING
April 3, 2002**

Dr. Jim McClellan, Commissioner, writing for the Commission
Mr. Chester Avery Commissioner, reading the statement for the Commission

— Nancy Jenkins Chair —

Were we to try to devise a truly democratic process by which our schools could be governed, we would want to start by gathering in one place all of those who live in our City and therefore have a stake in our educational system. We would then present to this gathering the questions facing our schools and allow every viewpoint to be given voice. When all assembled had reached an informed judgment, we would vote. Every vote would carry equal weight and every vote would be honestly counted.

But there is no chamber large enough to accommodate our entire population. Nor is there time enough to allow each member of our community to become an expert on the many complex issues that confront our schools. And who among us has the patience to listen to 128,000 speeches on every topic?

Instead of deciding our issues equally and directly as members of a community, we have chosen to delegate this duty to a board of nine of our fellow citizens. It is the premise of this delegation of responsibility that the nine will reach the same conclusion as would have come from the community it represents, had these one hundred and twenty-eight thousand been accorded the opportunity to assemble and render an informed decision for themselves. If the nine reach any other decision, they are not acting as the agents of a democratic process.

For the nine to be faithful to the task assigned them, they must be a microcosm of the community they represent.

Alexandria is a City diverse in its racial, religious, ethnic, political composition. It has citizens who possess great wealth and it has citizens whose work does not even procure for them the basic necessities of life. The school board of Alexandria should reflect this diversity. At the time the Board transitioned from an appointed to an elected Board in 1993, minority representation was the greatest concern.

We betray our ideals if it is not possible for any member of our community to be one of the nine. If only those of the largest racial or ethnic or religious group serve on the Board, or if only those of means have a chance to win office, there is no hope that the Board will be truly representative of its constituency.

The Human Rights Commission believes that two conditions should be met to assure that the Board can be an instrument of democratic choice:

1. Electoral districts must be of equal populations to assure that each elected official speaks for the same number of people.
2. Electoral districts should be as small as possible.

Given a board of nine, the optimal solution would be nine districts of equal population.

Elections that force candidates to run city-wide campaigns place at a disadvantage racial and ethnic groups who may comprise majorities within their own neighborhoods but are nevertheless minorities within the City as a whole.

City-wide elections also create costs that many in our community cannot afford. There is little chance that a candidate without resources can campaign successfully in a city the size of Alexandria. The chance of such a candidate reaching the electorate of even one-third of the City is likewise slim. There is a better chance of a candidate canvassing voters in one-ninth of the City.

Much of the effort expended in campaigning in Alexandria goes into the task of winning name recognition. As election day approaches, signs sprout up like ugly weeds in median strips all over the City. Seldom do these signs convey any issue content. They merely shout non-verbally the names of candidates.

If districts were smaller, perhaps even as small as one-ninth of the City, name recognition could be more easily won. Candidates might rely on their work and reputation within their own neighborhoods to become known to voters. They might even be able to campaign door-to-door. With name recognition earned more easily, perhaps candidates could move beyond establishing their presence to establishing their visions.

The Human Rights Commission believes that the interests of the City would be best served by replacing the current arrangement of three multimember districts with districts smaller in size, with nine single member districts being an idea worthy of serious consideration.

Chet Avery remarks - 4/3 Community Meeting

Good evening. My name is Chet Avery. I'm the vice chair of the Human Rights Commission and I bring the good wishes of Nancy Jenkins, who could not join us tonight, and the remarks that James McLellen prepared for this evening. Jim is a professor of American History and he's teaching tonight, so I will give my summary of his remarks that will be given to the court reporter.

I wish to take exception to what the City Attorney said. There was a notice that said that people wishing to speak could sign up for a presentation. So I proceeded, and others have proceeded on that document, so I hope that the record will be corrected to say that.

Tonight we are here to celebrate a compelling democratic principle that gives us the opportunity to select those individuals who will shape the governance, the policies and procedures of our school system. That school system will generate the quality of our political life, the quality of our civic life, the expansiveness and robustness of our economy, the level of cultural activity and the capacity of our culture to expand and enhance the life of people who live in this community and in the United States. This is serious business, and for this community of 128,000 people, the ideal situation would be for every citizen to convene and address the issues of education, of civilization that confront us in this community. However, we do not have that capacity, and we have set up a process, which we are reviewing tonight, to elect nine people that will be delegated the responsibility of determining the nature and quality of education in this community.

This process of selecting nine people is flawed if those nine people, in aggregate, do not reflect the ideas and the concerns of the 128,000 citizens in this community. We realize that Alexandria is a complex society consisting of many ethnic, religious, racial and other groups, and they should be involved in this process, and honor and respect should be attributed to them. We realize also that this is a community where there are many middle class individuals, many upper class individuals, and some people who find it very difficult to make ends meet, and they should be represented in this process, not only as voters, but also as potential candidates for the School Board.

We realize that certain principles should be adhered to. The issue of one vote should be honored. Secondly, we recognize that since there are nine positions, that we should honor, to the greatest extent possible, the process of having the districts be no less than nine districts.

What we'd like to acknowledge is that if you have three districts, it is very difficult for individuals of modest means or fairly ample means to make their presence known within those three districts. It requires enormous resources of time and finances to reach out to the community, to obtaining and solicit the ideas of people, as well as make their individual ideas known. We recognize that also, in huge courses of three groups, three districts, that many organizations, many subcommunities, many diverse groups may be submerged. Therefore, we recommend that we take a look at the issue of having nine districts, that these districts give individuals within each district an opportunity to go door to door to make themselves known, to not only develop name recognition, which is usually the only opportunity that you obtain in large

districts, but also perhaps to convey a vision based upon that individual candidate's use of education and what they've obtained from their human scale community.

Therefore, what the Human Rights Commission would like to recommend is that you give due consideration to taking a look at the opportunity provided here tonight and in the future of having nine districts where individuals will have a chance to meet, know and vote for candidates that they are familiar with that will represent them on the School Board.

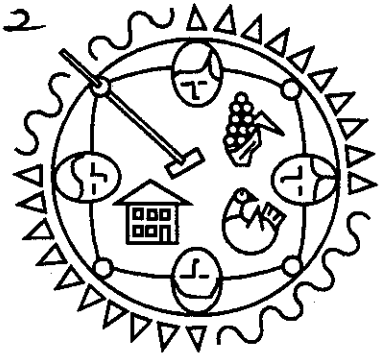
Thank you very much.

23
5-14-02

March 19, 2002

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
ALEXANDRIA, VA

2002 MAR 19 P 2:07



Mr. Phil Sunderland
City Manager
P.O. Box 178
Alexandria, VA 22313


Dear Mr. Sunderland:

Due to the population shift discovered as a result of the most recent Census, the City of Alexandria is examining various proposals to alter the current school board boundaries for the upcoming elections. The Tenants' and Workers' Support Committee (TWSC) is interested in this process because many of our members have children within Alexandria schools. As you know, members of the TWSC come mainly from the Latino and Black population. We therefore are interested in maximizing the voting power of our members. Specifically, we are looking to create a district, at least 45% of whom come from the Latino or Black population.

We are requesting that the City provide us with options, considering the objective of creating district(s) with a population at least 45% Latinos and Blacks. Specifically, the TWSC would like to receive maps that examine the following:

- 1) Creating nine roughly equivalent districts whereby each school board representative would represent a particular district.
- 2) Dividing the City into four roughly equivalent districts

Sincerely,


Jon Liss
Director

cc: Mayor and City Council

Barbara Lehr
5037 Domain Place
Alexandria, VA 22311
703-931-9447

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

Steven L. Rosenberg
Senior Assistant City Attorney
301 King Street, Suite 1300
Alexandria, VA 22314

April 10, 2002

RE: School Board Redistricting

I attended the presentation on April 3, 2002. That gave me insight into other citizens concerns and a clearer view of what streets fall within the proposed new districts.

My children are currently at T.C. Williams and Hammond. I am a Past PTA President of John Adams Elementary School. While President, most of the John Adams families voted in District C while I voted in District B. This was an advantage. I could contact six elected board members with interests in our school issues. But beyond that I called and was well received by all board members when the issues we needed clarification on or representation on related to the committees they chaired.

The elected board members serve all the students. This is a harder concept for elementary school parents and PTAs than it is for parents and PTAs at the secondary school level. The issues are sometimes single school in orientation but more often the issues are broad based if not universal. I oppose nine separate voting districts.

I highly recommend Proposed School District Option 3. Each District in this plan contains a mix of schools and neighborhoods. Each District contains traditionally stronger and weaker PTAs. Each District contains elementary and secondary schools. The population and racial breakdowns are realistic.

Thank you for the opportunity to give input.

CC: City Council and School Board Members



rhersch@ISAGROUP.com

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex
Subject: School Board Redistricting

04/24/02 08:55 AM

Dear Ms. Frizzell:

I am a parent and PTA member at James K. Polk Elementary School. I am writing to show my support for proposal # 6 or proposal #8. As a Polk parent I feel it is important to have Polk, Ramsey, Patrick Henry, and John Adams remain a community of interest.

Thank you very much.

Regards,

Rebekah K. Hersch, Ph.D.
701 North Pickett Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22304
703/370-0787



DRKELLERS@aol.com

04/25/02 07:54 PM

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex
Subject: School board redistricting

Dear Ms. Frizzelli:

I am writing to comment on school board redistricting. I have been a citizen and homeowner in Alexandria for 25 years and have 3 children - one graduated from TC Williams and 2 still in the system.

I favor option number 8 which groups the Polk, Patrick Henry, John Adams and Ramsay voting schools into district C. These 4 schools have similar communities and populations. They all feed into Hammond Middle School. It would be nice to have school board members to continue to represent these communities, as the needs of the students are slightly different than those attending east end schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Carol Keller
821 N. Latham St.



kcannady@erols.com

04/26/02 11:57 AM

To: Ignacio Pessoa@Alex

cc:

Subject: League of Women Voters Comments on School Board redistricting

BlankDear Mr. Pessoa,

I've been asked by the board of the Alexandria League of Women Voters to relay our opinion about the redistricting process for the school board. We realize that only some of our comments are applicable to your charge of recommending a good three district plan. However, we think it best to share our thoughts with you. Later, when school board redistricting reaches the public hearing stage, we'll probably want to testify.

The following is the statement the board agreed upon:

The League of Women Voters believes that most of the proposed plans for redrawing the three school board voting districts accomplish the goal of equal and fair representation as well as can be done within the confines of three districts.

As nearly as possible, the three districts should be drawn so that parents are able to vote in the same district where their children attend elementary school. We believe parents are an especially important "community of interest."

We also believe that after the next election cycle, the City Council should request a charter change from the General Assembly that would give us wide latitude to consider other possible voting district configurations. For example, we should give thought to districts which could achieve goals, such as a minority-majority district, that are not possible with three large districts. We should also consider other arrangements such as some at-large school board members and some elected from districts.

Lastly, as a community, Alexandria must do more to educate all our voters on the school voting districts to increase voter participation in the May 2003 election and later elections.

Sincerely yours,

Katy Cannady, Local Government Chair, Alexandria League of Women Voters

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF BLACK WOMEN, INC.

Alexandria, Virginia Chapter

P. O. Box 1641 • Alexandria, VA 22313 • alexncbw@aol.com



April 26, 2002

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Ms. Joanna Frizzell
Law Clerk
Office of the City Attorney
City Hall
301 King Street
Suite 1300
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Ms. Frizzell:

In response to the City of Alexandria's request for public comment regarding school district realignment, the National Congress of Black Women (NCBW) Alexandria, Virginia Chapter submits its comments for the public record. The National Congress of Black Women is a non-partisan political organization that addresses the aspirations and concerns of the African American community with special attention to the unique and particular needs of African American women and youth.

The NCBW Alexandria, Virginia Chapter membership has reviewed the eight proposed alternatives that were available at the time of our membership vote. Of the eight alternatives, the membership has agreed that Option 1 is most acceptable.

The NCBW Alexandria, Virginia Chapter reserves the right to submit further comment, should subsequent review of Option nine, which we understand has recently been developed, necessitates such action.

Sincerely,

Doris J. Cammack Spencer

Doris J. Cammack Spencer
Chair
Alexandria, Virginia Chapter

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Dorothy White
LaFrances Williams
Viola Wilson
Dr. Maxine Wood
Hon. Joyce Woodson
Antoinette Young, Esq.

I live in the West End on Fillmore Avenue in Dowden Terrace and favor proposals 6 and 8. I am against the city being divided into 9 districts. It is important to me to keep the Dowden Terrace neighborhood together and to keep the West End schools together.

Nancy Carver

--- John Carver

--- nancarver@earthlink.net

--- EarthLink: The #1 provider of the Real Internet.



kkeenoy@acps.k12.va.
us

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex
Subject: school board redistricting

05/01/02 09:02 AM

I prefer Option 8. I live in Duke Gardens and Options 6 & 7 make my district (green) a group that covers areas of the city that do not have any cohesiveness.

I feel that any more than three school board districts is too many. It would make it hard to get enough qualified candidates to run.



tapete@erols.com

05/02/02 04:07 PM

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex
Subject: School Board Districts

Please use option 8. It is the best representative of the city's populations.

Margo Chisholm
John Adams Elementary School parent



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA



REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
TOM PARKINS

ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATOR
ERIC L. SPICER

May 6, 2002

ELECTORAL BOARD
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STEVE KATSURINIS

Mr. Philip Sunderland, City Manager
Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street, Room 3500
Alexandria, VA. 22314

Dear Mr. Sunderland:

On behalf of the Alexandria Electoral Board and in response to your memorandum of April 9, 2002, I am writing to comment on the proposed school board redistricting plans that will be considered by City Council in the near future. First, let me say that the Electoral Board is not concerned with political considerations regarding school board district boundaries. Rather, the Electoral Board is concerned with the fair, impartial and accurate administration of elections. This requires precincts with boundaries that are rational, simple to understand and convenient to voters and facilities that are accessible and functional. In that regard, the Electoral Board has serious reservations with precinct modifications contained in school district options 9 - 14 which impinge on the required factors.

In early 2001 the Electoral Board worked for several months to develop a precinct plan, ultimately passed by the Council, which took the following factors into consideration:

Legal

- Limit of 5000 registered voters per precinct at time of adoption
- Limit of 4000 turnout per precinct in any one election
- Boundaries that follow census block lines
- Boundaries that are based on reasons or purposes that are legal
- Polling places that are within 1500 yards of the precinct
- Polling places that are fully accessible to persons with disabilities

Practical/Administrative

- Physical barriers such as super highways or rivers that do not split precincts.
- Legislative and district boundaries that do not split precincts except in extraordinary circumstances.
- All polling facilities must have adequate space for projected turnout, communications, security, and parking.

On February 13 of this year at the joint City Council, School Board and Electoral Board meeting at Tucker School, the Electoral Board discussed the above factors and the care that must be taken

Mr. Philip Sunderland, City Manager

May 6, 2002

Page 2

in establishing precincts. The City Attorney discouraged reconfiguration of current precincts. City Council members appeared to agree that precinct modifications were not needed. Nevertheless, new precincts have been proposed.

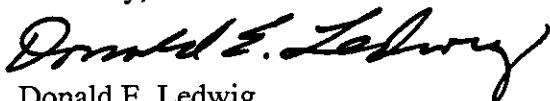
The Electoral Board has the following comments regarding these new precincts:

- Every facility used as a polling place must be fully accessible. Current polling place facilities established by the City Council last year are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. Newly proposed polling places may not be. The state is no longer granting waivers on polling places that are inaccessible. The Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities will confirm that there is far more to determining accessibility than the existence of a wheelchair ramp. Facilities must be extensively surveyed to insure that they meet standards.
- Accessibility aside, the Electoral Board has doubts that there are adequate, available facilities within convenient reach of voters in a number of newly proposed precincts.
- Proposed precincts include increasing the number of voters at Ladrey, South Port, and Minnie Howard. Polling rooms there are small. These facilities are currently stretched to the limit in terms of the number of voters that can be accommodated.
- A large number of changes in precincts at one time could produce city-wide confusion among voters as to the location of their new polling place, their candidate(s), and why the changes were made.

In summary, the Electoral Board urges the City Council to make certain that any new or modified precincts will be legal, understandable, convenient to voters, functional and fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

Thank you for considering the Electoral Board's concerns.

Sincerely,



Donald E. Ledwig
Secretary, Alexandria Electoral Board

c: Mayor and City Council
City Attorney
School Board
Electoral Board



sjohnson@acps.k12.va
.us

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex
Subject: Redistricting

05/07/02 07:14 AM

Thank you for correcting the Chart on School Board Member Districts and for adding a note of explanation for me.

The following are my redistricting comments.

I oppose the establishment of nine districts. The drawing of these lines would be almost impossible even with the ability to change precinct lines. Identification of 'communities of interest' particularly in the west-end would be subject to much debate and in fact would disconnect community ties that have been formed since the original districts were established in 1994. Community in the west-end has grown greatly since the establishment of the School Districts. This community is already going to suffer some tearing and disruption because of the need to redistrict. I urge that the existing ties be maintained as much as possible. Therefore, I support option 8 or a minor adjustment to it.

Option 8 divides the west-end between two districts but divides the community in such a way that is logical and maintains a feeling of community even in the shift. It is the most balanced of the proposals. It does keep all of John Adams, Ramsay and most of Polk together as one community. It also keeps South Port and Tucker together which because of Cameron Station and Tucker School (the home school of South Port and Cameron Station residents) is an important community connection to maintain. The only problem is in the Minnie Howard and Beatley precincts which, if possible, should be exchanged. However I realize they are unequal precincts and the numbers would be off in trying balance the population between districts. I would like to risk making what may be perceived as a self serving suggestion but I believe is the wish of my neighborhood Dowden Terrace. Since the restructuring of precincts seems possible in the nine district options, PLEASE return our neighborhood to one precinct. We are up against Fairfax county and have Seminary Road as our only exist and entrance into the rest of the City. To divide us between two precincts which further divides us into two school voting districts is a rip in our community. I understand that the west-end needs to have population shifts but to shift half of our neighborhood to another precinct north across Seminary Road while shifting Southern Towers population south INTO the precinct we have been taken out of, makes NO sense in trying to adjust the voting population in the west-end! It has also further complicated redistricting by putting two incumbent school board members in the same precinct making many of the redistricting options objectionable when incumbency is considered.

Good Luck and I look forward to the next stage in this process. Susan
Johnson
2918 N Rosser St
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OCurtis@HNTB.com
05/07/02 06:54 PM

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex
Subject: Comments on Proposed Redistricting for School Board

I wish to recommend to the staff and the City Council that the decision for a redistricting of the School Board be based on the following perspectives:

- * It is essential that the requirements of the Federal government and state law be met. But since many proposals can be constructed within these requirements, they are necessary but not sufficient determinators of what is best for this public school community.
- * Rather, the maintenance of communities of interest, which cut across racial, ethnic, political, and economic lines in our diverse school population are what should lead to our district boundaries. To the maximum extent possible, those who attend the same school should be included in the same districts, and share representatives. The only schools for which this is not possible under anything except an at-large election would be Minnie Howard and TC Williams.
- * To the extent that the 2001 redefinition of the precincts in this city did not adhere to the principle of communities of interest, then the Council should not duck this opportunity to redress the mistakes which were made in that effort. It is easy to redraw the precinct lines to ensure that communities (not simply for school board but for all offices) are not arbitrarily divided.
- * The next point I would make is that with the school system and this City subject to so much dynamic change (as we have witnessed in school populations, overall population, changing demographics, etc.), the idea of a certain degree of stability in the districts is a desirable outcome. To me, this can be translated into trying to maintain incumbents in their same districts to the maximum extent possible. The intent is not to provide a political favor to the incumbents, but rather to provide the citizen/voter/school parent with a point of contact they can get to know, with whom one can therefore establish a relationship.

With these thoughts in mind, I offer the following specific comments on the multiple proposals which have come forward in the past months:

1. I urge rejection of the notion of the nine district concepts. This places too much of an emphasis on the racial balances and not enough on what people of all colors share in common. We all must work together to make these schools the best they can be, and to start with a division along lines which the school children themselves do not recognize is a philosophical as well as a political mistake. We can be more effective than this simplistic approach to trying to increase minority participation in governance of our schools. Nine single persons districts will be divisive, not cohesive. Let us work together.
2. The several four district proposals all trouble me to a great extent, so I urge their rejection. They seem to be a forced way to isolate "sure" minority-majority districts, which as noted above is a simplistic notion. They argue that a racial community of interest is more critical than a school-based and neighborhood-based community of interest. As one who lives in a highly diverse neighborhood, and sends his children to highly diverse schools, these are the wrong way to go about redistricting. They are unnecessary, divisive, and they do not appeal to our higher interests and

instincts.

3. While I would have loved to assemble a better alternative to the original three-district schemes that did even more to meet the objectives I laid out in the opening paragraph, I am left with recommending to you that you favor the Options 6, 7, or 8. Options 6 and 7 I think have stronger intuitive communities of interest relative to the elementary school districts; they disrupt the incumbents more than Option 8 which has more a gerry-mandering feel to it. Overall, Options 6 and 8 which keep Polk School in with that area just west of Shirley Highway has the strongest community sense to them.

Regardless of which is selected, I think the City needs to correct the dividing line between the John Adams School precinct and the NoVa Arts Center precinct. The reprecincting left my neighborhood, the Seminary West neighborhood, split from its historical home with the rest of the neighborhood of the John Adams School south of Seminary Road. The simple solution is to take the Southern Towers tract, place in it NoVa Arts Center, and return the Seminary West area south of Seminary back to the John Adams precinct where it belongs. It would not affect any of the boundaries for the school districts, but it is the right thing to do to keep neighborhoods together and to protect communities of interest.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this material.

Owen P. Curtis
5465 Fillmore Avenue

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**Allen.Flanigan@USPT
O.GOV**

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex
Subject: Proposed school board redistricting options

05/09/02 11:46 AM

My name is Allen Flanigan and I live in St. Elmo/Mount Jefferson neighborhood (Laverne Ave.). My preferred option of the proposed plans to date is option 13. I believe this option will give us the best chance of having a school board that is truly representative of the community of stakeholders, particularly those who support, and whose children attend, Alexandria public schools.



gwhitlow@clark.net

05/09/02 04:27 PM

To: Joanna Frizzell@Alex

cc:

Subject: redistricting

Dear Ms. Frizzell

Is it possible to receive notice/and or a copy of your report to the city council? Although the maps are shown, they don't give any details on who (and why) is proposing each option, and they are hard to read, even printed off the internet.

As a homeowner in DelRay for the past 15 years, I intend to be more vocal in any redistricting, as the last effort has me driving to Cora Kelly to vote, where as before, I was able to walk a block to Mt. Vernon El. I am assuming school redistricting would also have an impact on voting redistricting?

As far as comments to (what I can tell on) these options, quite a few are not even close to being equal with regards to population in race. This concerns me, and I was wondering the rationale behind these options now up for review.

With the amount of city taxes we pay, it is very disheartening to see Alexandria Public schools at the bottom of the test scores, year after year. I would like to know how redistricting would put our schools before those of Falls Church proper and Fairfax county. That is what really needs to be addressed.

Thank you,

Greg Whitlow
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ndria.org

To: Ignacio Pessoa@Alex
Subject: NAACP Position on School Board Redistricting

05/10/02 05:10 PM

Dear Ignacio:

After review of the various redistricting options made available for purposes of redrawing the school board election district boundaries, the Alexandria Branch of the NAACP has decided to endorse the nine district option.

Although there can be no guarantee that even this option will bring representation on the board back to the level of minority representation that was reflected in the appointed school board scenario, we feel the nine district set-up may afford the "opportunity" for election of school board members who reflect the City of Alexandria school population.

Please accept this e-mail message as our initial position statement on this matter. A more detailed statement will follow.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Howard

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