

City of Burlington 2012 Redistricting Summary – Wards

Introduction

Each decade, following the U.S. decennial census, boundaries are modified to rebalance internal governing districts or wards so that they represent “essentially equal shares of the district’s population based on the census data.”¹ Population growth takes place unevenly, and therefore must be equally redistributed when more current data becomes available. This process is also referred to as “redistricting”.

Each district or jurisdiction is responsible for the rebalancing of its internal and/or director districts. Rules for redistricting these internal or director districts/wards are contained in RCW 29A.76.010 and RCW 29A.76.020.¹ Legislative and congressional district lines are adjusted by the bipartisan Washington State Redistricting Committee. City wards, port commissioner, school director, and several other local director district boundaries are rebalanced and redrawn by those individual local jurisdictions.

Upon receiving the 2010 census data, city, county and local jurisdictions have eight months under state law to adjust their district/ward boundaries and submit finalized redistricting plans to the County Auditor. Prior to adopting new city ward boundaries, public hearings may be required.

The Skagit County GIS Department in cooperation with the City of Burlington, have rebalanced and modified the six City of Burlington council wards for redistricting purposes. The actual task of redrawing ward boundaries is accomplished using Geographic Information System (GIS) software in conjunction with population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. The smallest level of census geography containing population information is the census block. Analysts use the GIS software to aggregate census blocks into wards and calculate total population in order to maintain wards with equal population. Census blocks are the smallest unit of geography available, and therefore only entire census blocks can be aggregated and cannot be split.

This document and corresponding map (map no. 110.0) represent the proposed 2012 City of Burlington Council Ward boundaries developed using this process and the following guiding principles:

1. Rebalance ward boundaries such that they represent essentially equal shares of the population based on 2010 U.S. Census data.¹
2. Maintain contiguous wards using direct boundaries that follow clear geographic features.
3. Maintain current city ward boundary lines as much as possible.

¹ “Guide to Redistricting” Washington State Secretary of State, Olympia, Washington. September 2010.

Analysis

Table 1 below shows the total population for each ward at three key times during the last 10 years: 2002, 2010 and the current 2012 proposed version. The 2002 values show the total population of each ward as adopted after redistricting in 2002 using Census 2000 data. The 2010 values show each ward's current unbalanced population prior to redistricting for 2012 using Census 2010 data. The 2012 Proposed column shows each ward's population after rebalancing per 2010 Census data.

Total Population			
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2012 Proposed</u>
Ward 1	1,155	1,162	1,403
Ward 2	1,509	2,306	1,406
Ward 3	1,120	991	1,398
Ward 4	758	1,160	1,394
Ward 5	1,107	1,546	1,379
Ward 6	1,144	1,223	1,408

Table 1

Table 2 shows the differences in population per ward as a percentage from the average ward population at the same times over the last 10 years. The total population of the City of Burlington, per 2010 Census data is 8,388 which yields a target of 1,398 per ward after rebalancing. Note that as of 2010 and prior to rebalancing, Ward 2 is approximately 65% over the average ward population, while Ward 3 is approximately 29% under the average. After rebalancing, the proposed 2012 ward boundaries yield ward population totals that vary at most by 1.4%.

% Difference from Average			
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2012 Proposed</u>
Ward 1	2.02	-16.88	0.36
Ward 2	33.28	64.95	0.57
Ward 3	-1.07	-29.11	0.00
Ward 4	-33.05	-17.02	-0.29
Ward 5	-2.22	10.59	-1.36
Ward 6	1.05	-12.52	0.72

Table 2

Results

The current (2010) population totals clearly illustrate the need for rebalancing since the difference in total population between wards vary as much as 1,315 (65%). The largest difference in total population per ward after rebalancing in 2002 was 751 persons (33%). Similarly, the proposed 2012 rebalanced ward population totals produced by this analysis vary by a maximum of 29 persons (1.4%).

¹ "Guide to Redistricting" Washington State Secretary of State, Olympia, Washington. September 2010.