



Election Ordinance Amendments

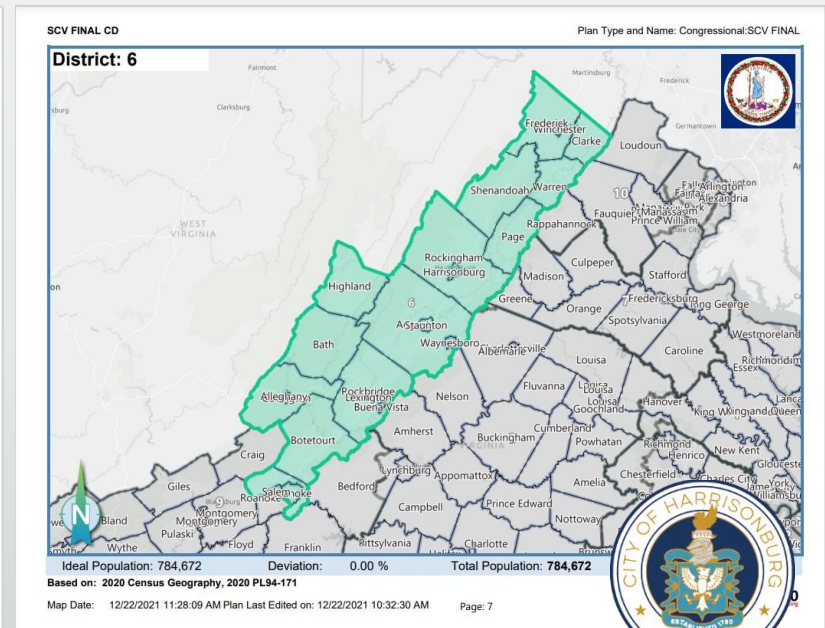
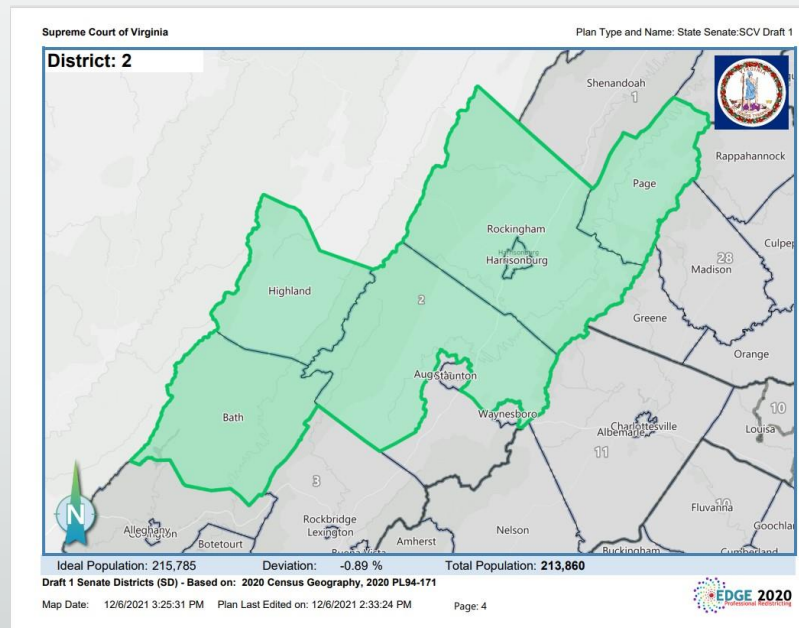
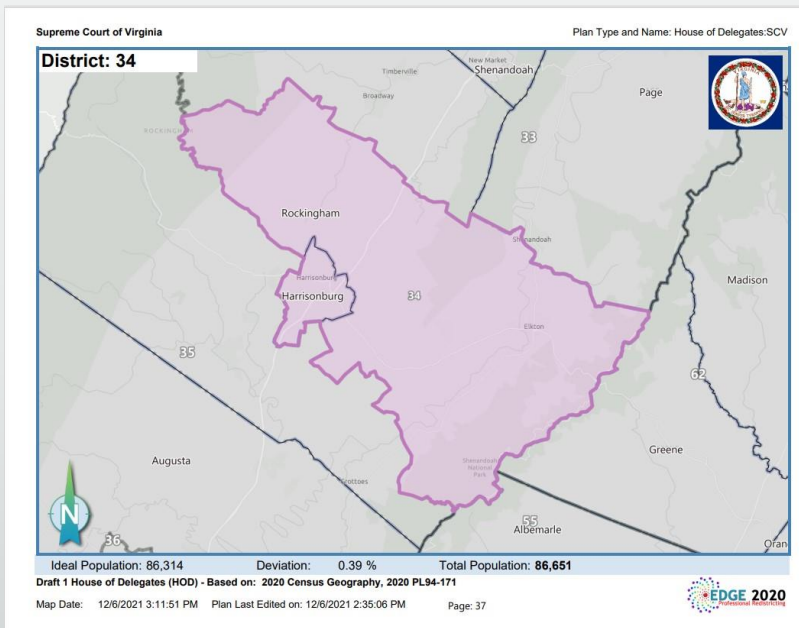
March 8th, 2022



Summary

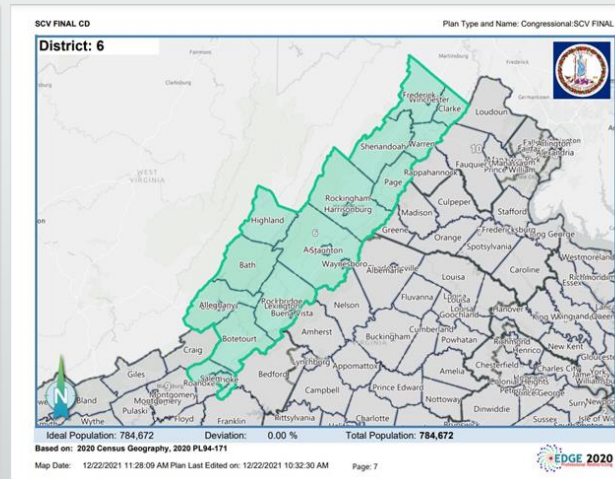
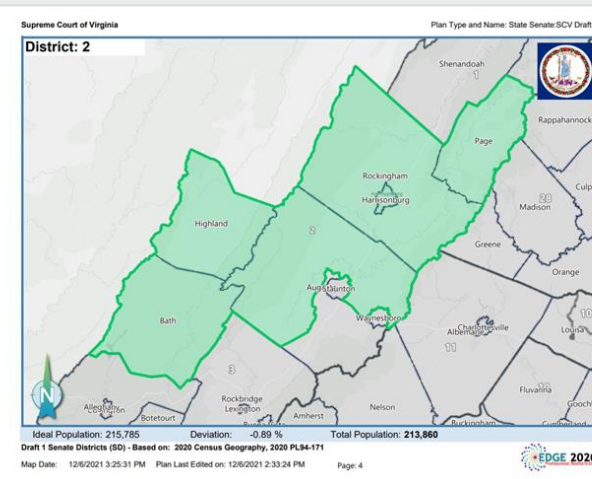
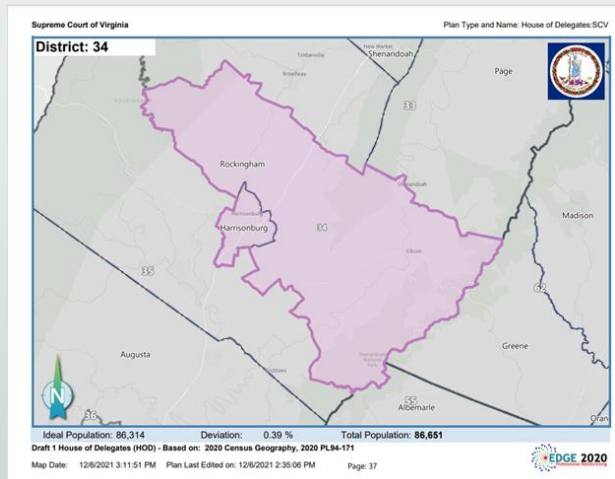
Public Hearing to consider amendments to sections 1-11-11 to adopt new ward boundaries, and 1-11-12 to adopt new precinct boundaries as well as changing the polling location in the 105 (JMU) precincts.

The Electoral Board voted 3-0 to adopt new ward and precinct boundaries and voted 2-1 to change the JMU polling location from the Convocation Center to Godwin Hall.



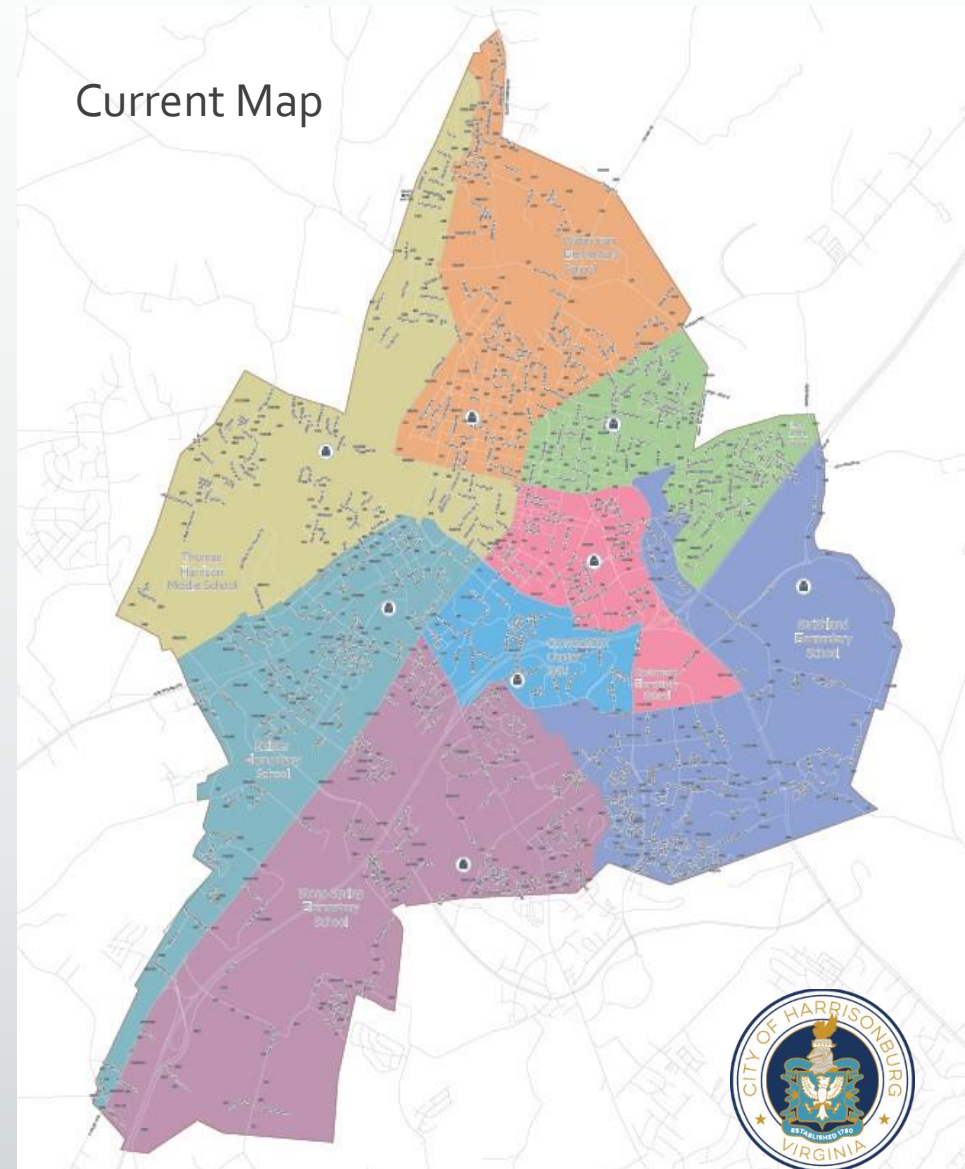
Background

Every ten years each state receives updated information from the Federal Census to conduct redistricting. The Virginia Supreme Court (empowered by new legislation adopted by referendum) with the help of two party nominated “Special Masters”, approved new maps for Virginia on December 28th, 2021. Therefore, with new maps in place we can consider changes to Harrisonburg voting precincts. In the state of Virginia Electoral Boards can recommend changes to precincts or wards, but it’s up to the Governing Body (City Council) to make the final approval. Also, Governing Bodies are empowered to make changes to Precinct or Ward boundaries at any time, they are not restricted to performing this task after statewide redistricting.



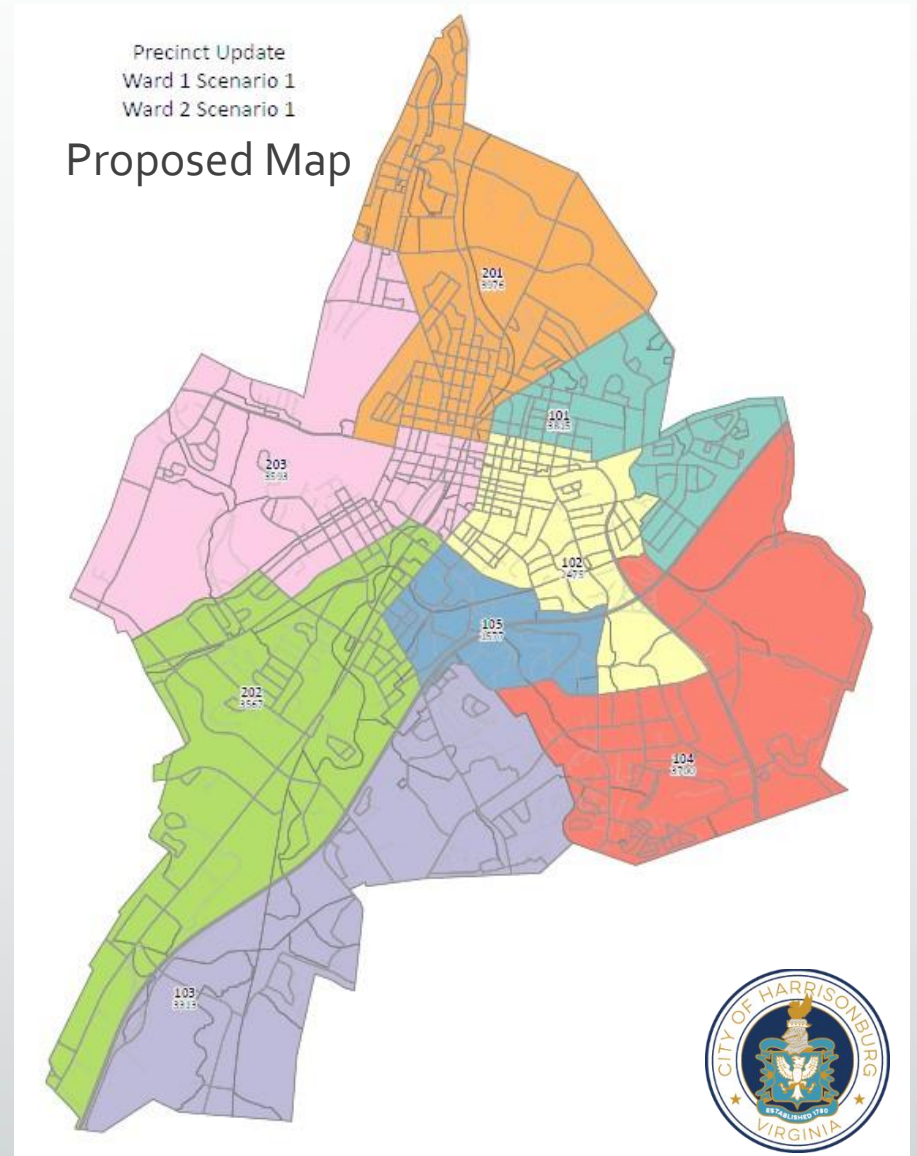
Background

Harrisonburg currently has 8 voting precincts and 2 wards. Precincts represent a subdivision that determines where people vote, Wards are a subdivision that determines Governing body representation. Currently the City of Harrisonburg votes at large (citywide) for all elected offices. Ward lines are required to stay intact in case of legislative or Governing body changes made to representative classification of elected office. Each ward or precinct must have clearly defined lines. Clearly defined lines could mean streets, train tracks, interstates, property lines, or Census tracts. Each precinct must be wholly contained in a ward and must have one polling location either inside its border or within one mile of the border.



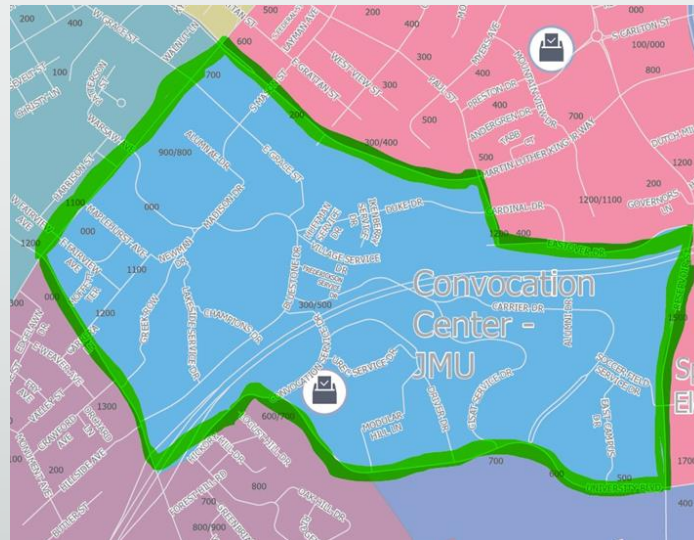
Background

After discussions with the Electoral Board in 2021 on what concerns they had with the current precinct configuration, the General Registrar met with GIS Admin. Chip Brown to formulate map options. At a January 14th work session Mr. Brown presented 3 map options based on various scenarios created by the General Registrar. These options used Census tracts, Interstate 81, and existing streets to draw clearly defined precinct and ward boundaries. At its January 24th meeting the Electoral Board voted 3-0 to recommend Ward 1 Scenario 1 Ward 2 Scenario 1 (Scenario 1).



Background

In 2020 JMU alerted the General Registrar's office that after 2021 the Convocation Center would be unavailable for an indefinite amount of time. Working with representatives from JMU the General Registrar and the Electoral Board toured six locations on campus: Students Success Center, URec, The Festival, Atlantic Union Bank Center, X-Labs and Godwin Hall. After comparing each location against criteria created by staff, the General Registrar was able to narrow down the choice to two locations: X-Labs and Godwin Hall. At the February 14th meeting the Electoral Board voted to recommend Godwin Hall by a vote of 2-1, with X-Labs receiving 1 vote.



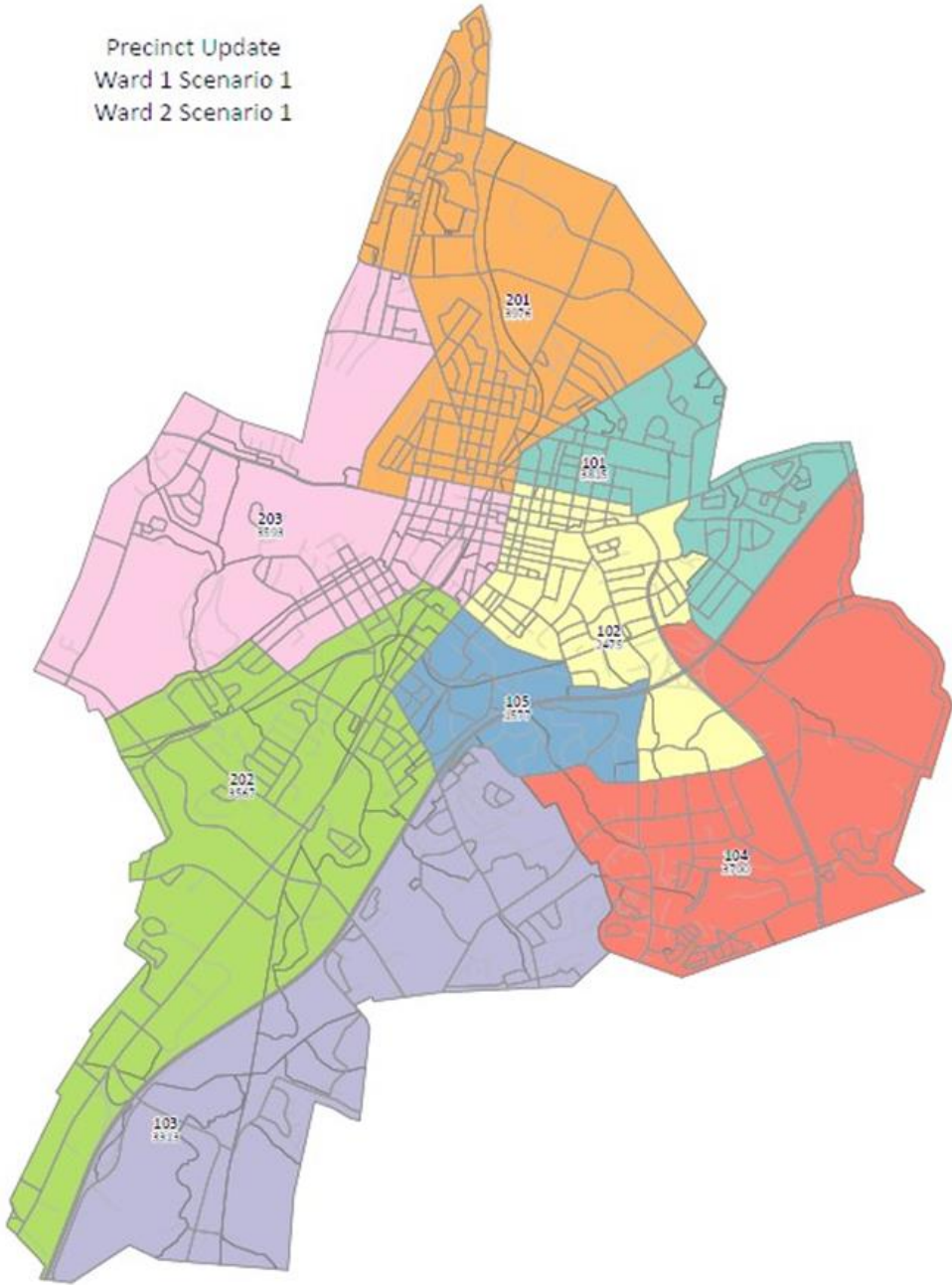
Key Issues

There are a few parameters to consider when creating new precinct maps for Harrisonburg.

1. No precinct should have more than 4,500 registered voters, as state law says a precinct can't have more than 5,000 voters.
2. The borders for wards and precincts are clearly defined, and that each precinct is wholly contained within one ward.
3. Each precinct boundary should fall within a mile of City Hall, so that City Hall can continue to be the emergency back up polling location for all precincts.
4. Addressing population growth in precincts 101 Simms, 103 Stone Spring, 104 Smithland, and 201 Waterman.
5. Bring all voters on EMU and VMRC campuses under one precinct.
6. Addressing voters in 203 THMS that must drive past Waterman Elementary to vote to vote at THMS.
7. Bring voters from surrounding precincts into 102 Spotswood to address population growth.



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

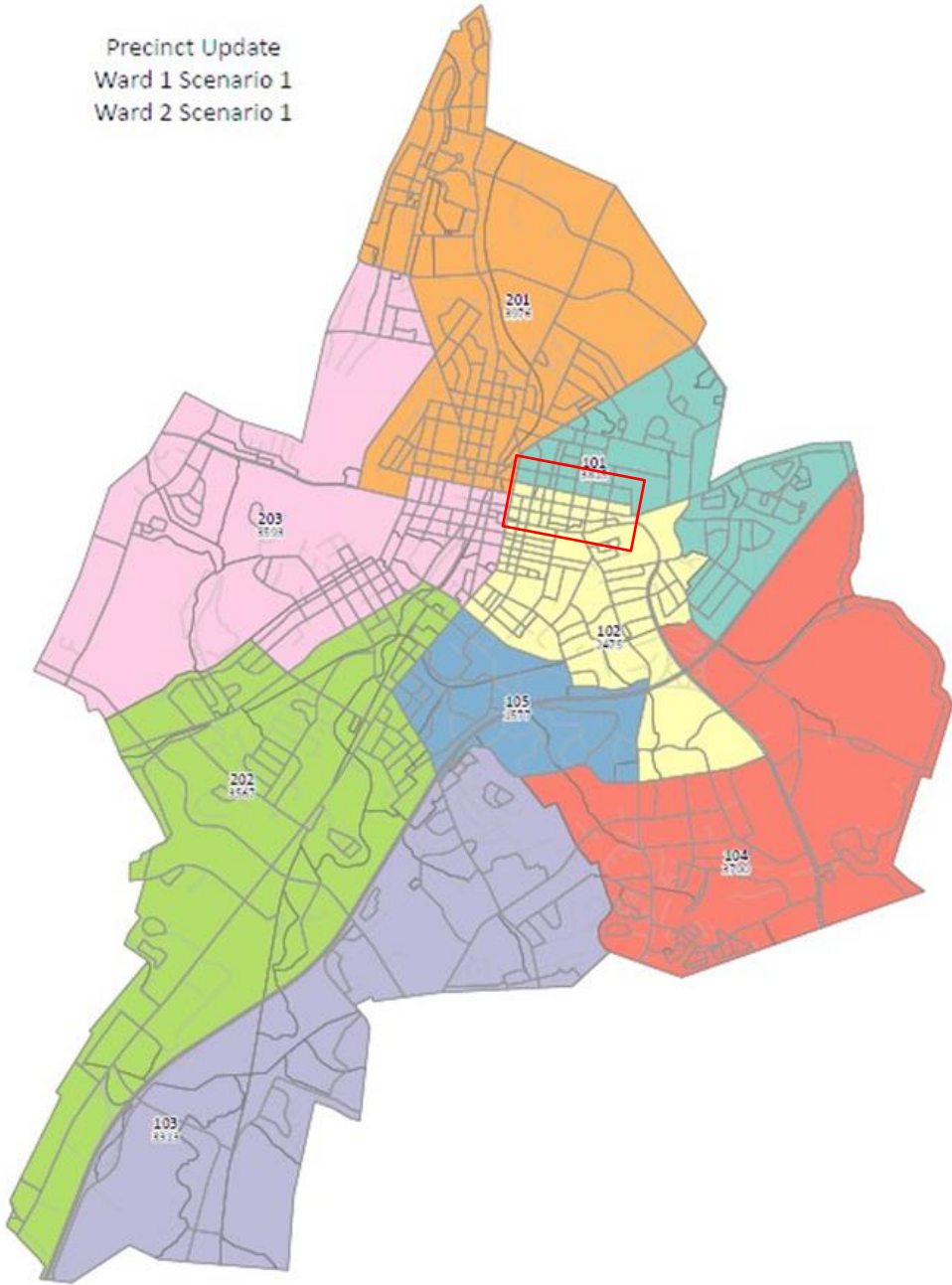


Key Issues

Here are the changes made by the proposed map



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

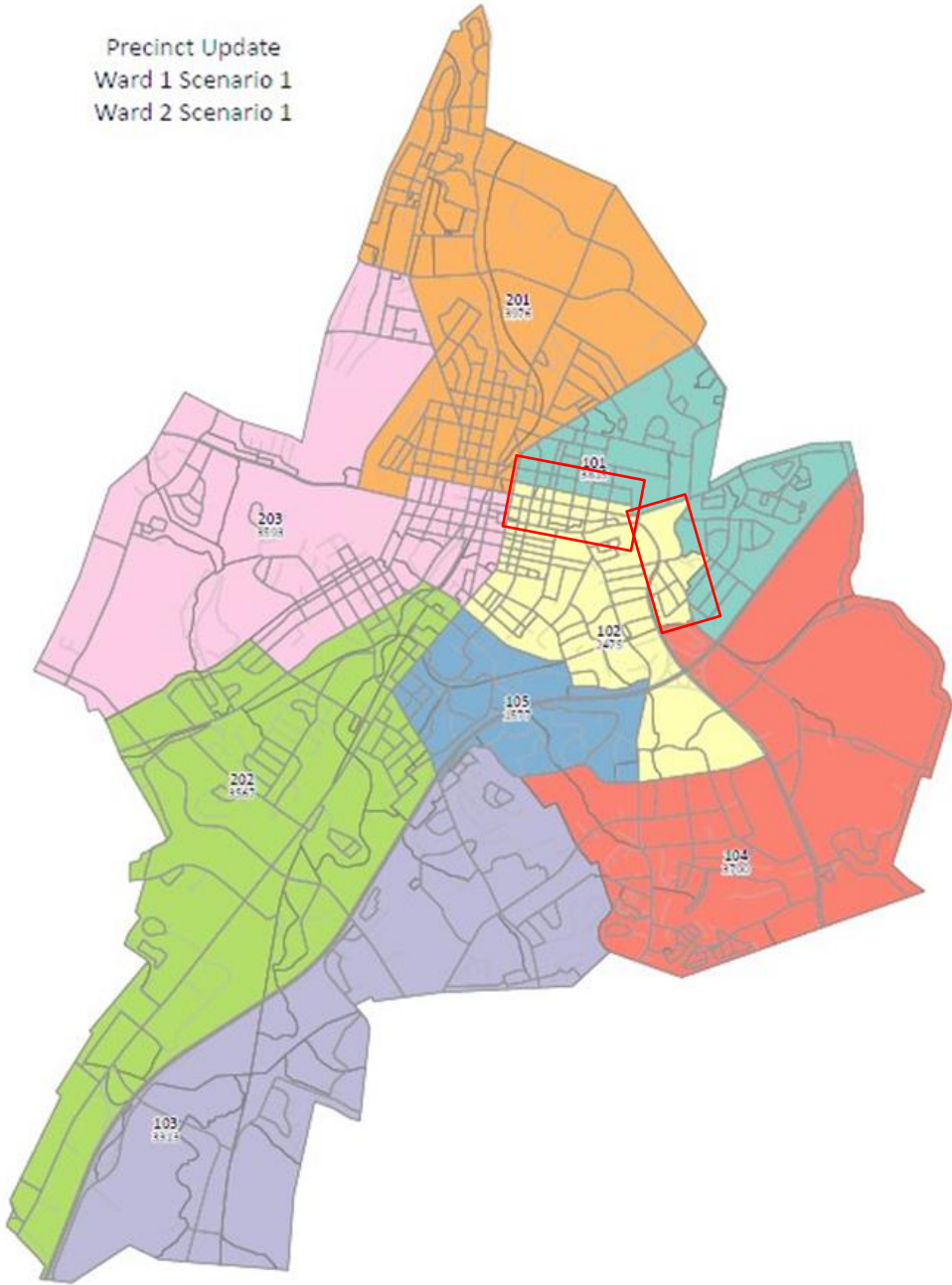


Key Issues

- **101 Simms:** Voters south of East Rock Street and east of North Main Street will be moved into 102 Spotswood.



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

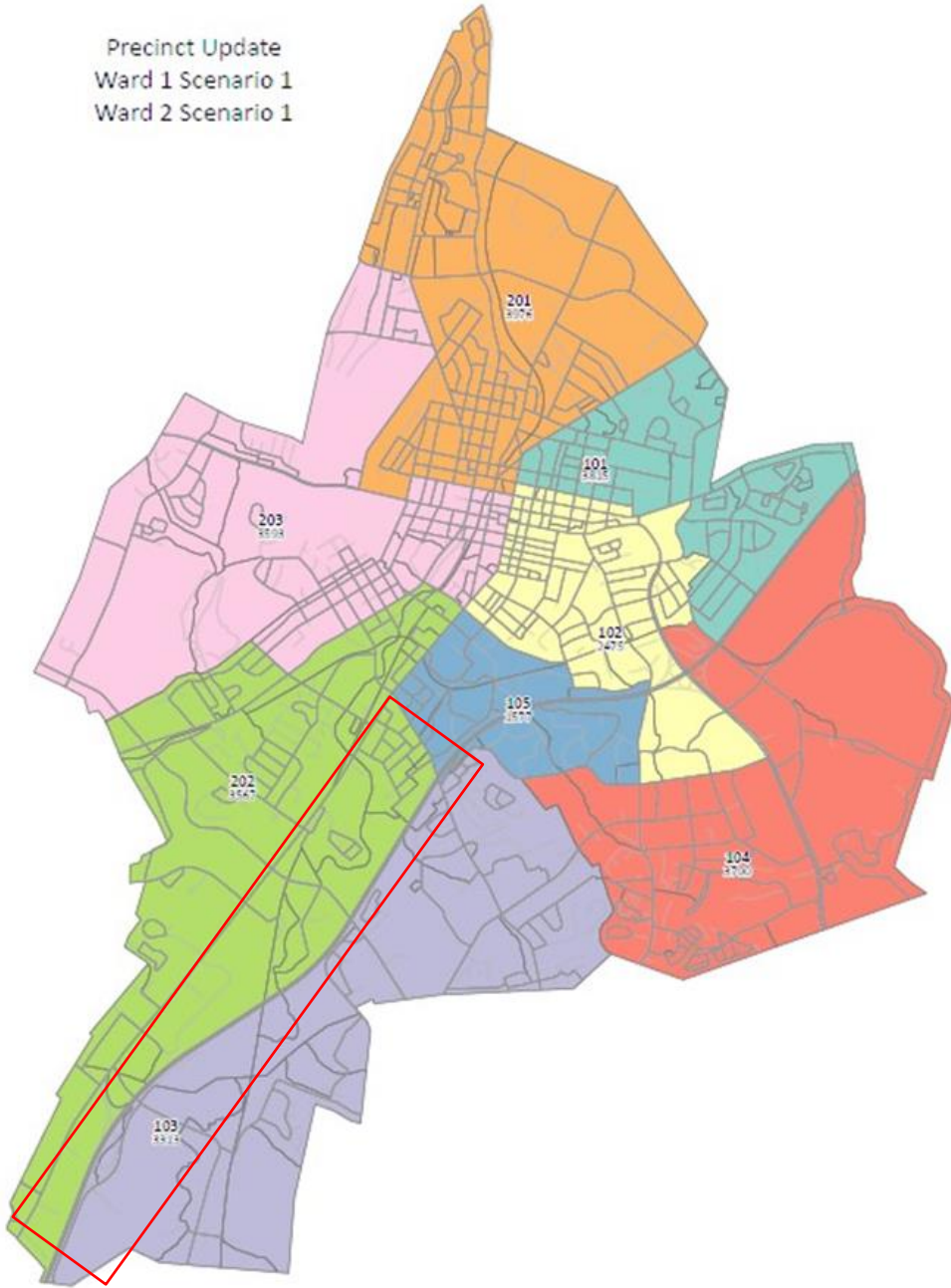


Key Issues

- **102 Spotswood:** Adding voters between East Market Street and East Rock Street from 101 Simms and voters south of Old Furnace Road, east of East Market Street and north of Blue Ridge Drive from 104 Smithland.



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

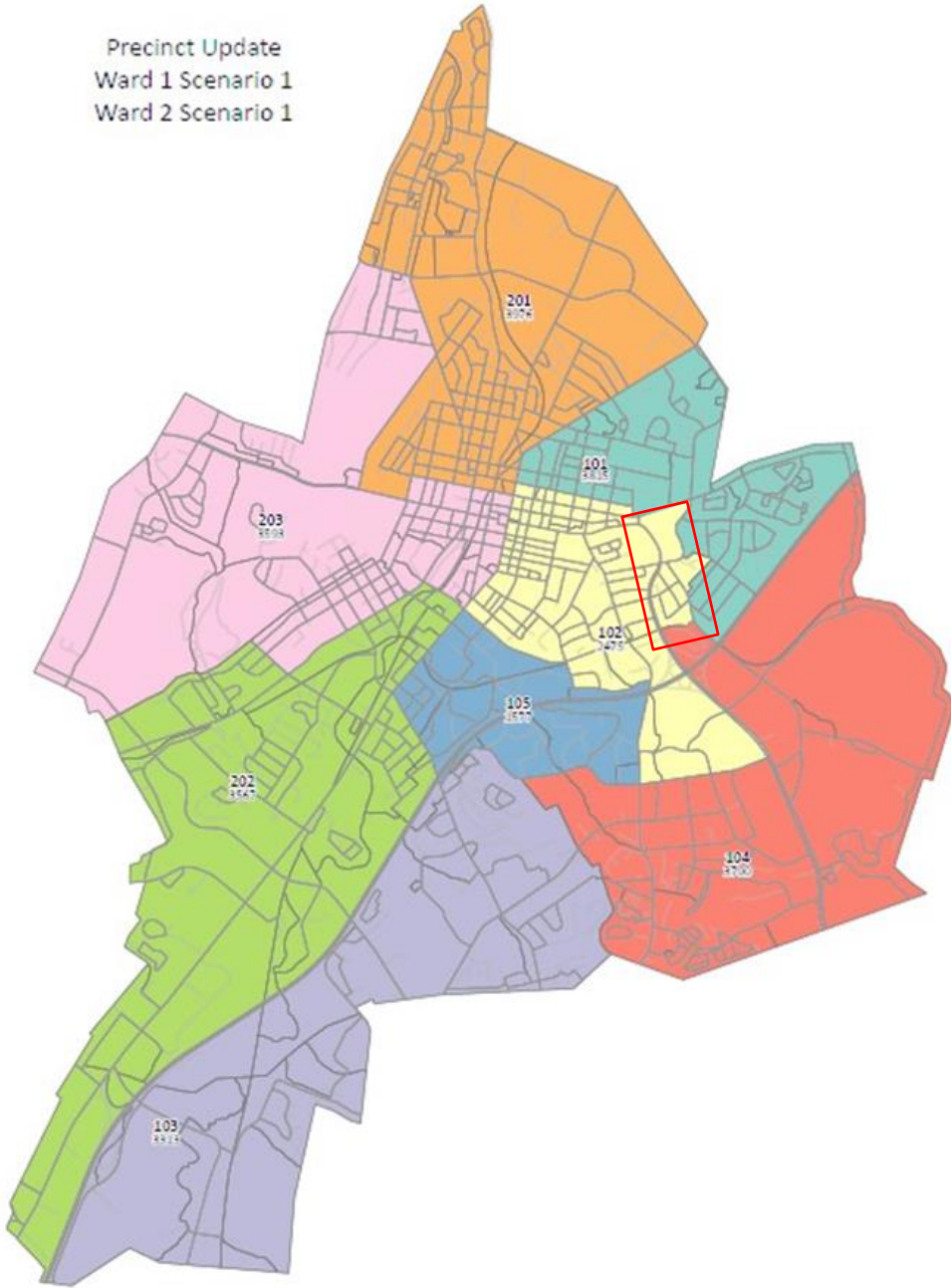


Key Issues

- **103 Stone Spring:** Voters between Interstate 81 and Main street will be moved into 201 Keister.



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

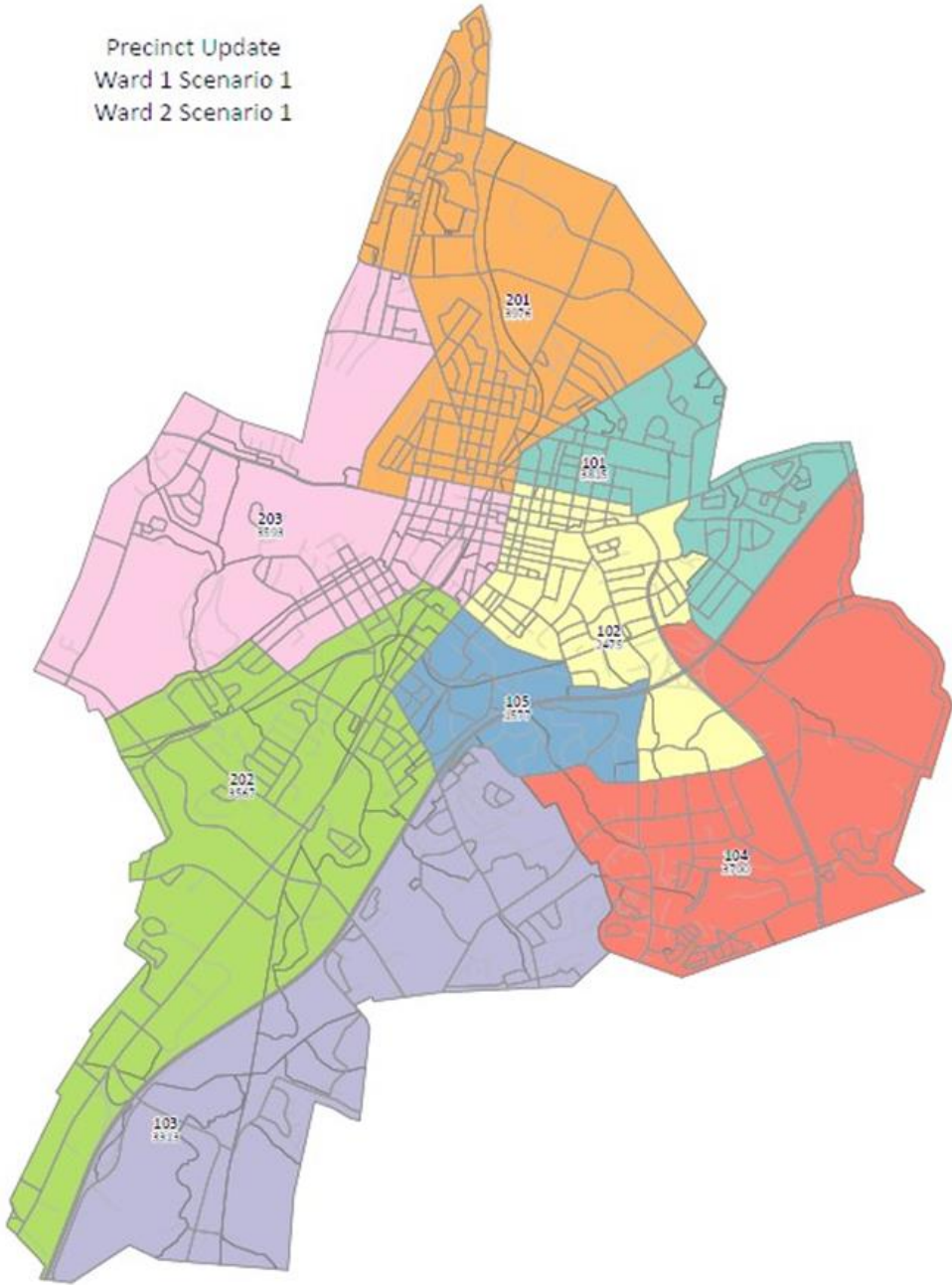


Key Issues

- **104 Smithland:** Voters between E Market street Blue Ridge Drive and 101 Simms will now be in 102 Spotswood.



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

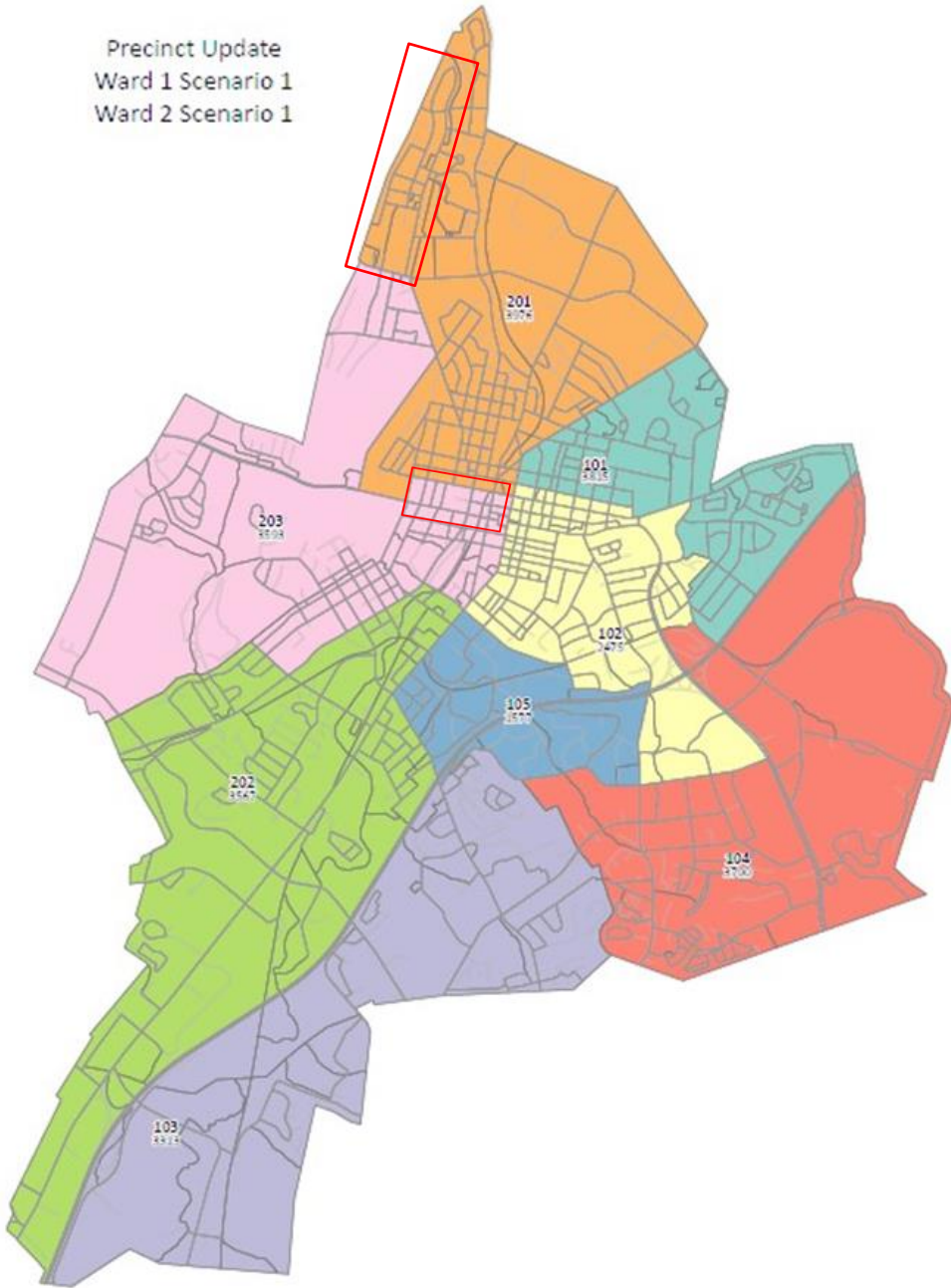


Key Issues

- **105 JMU:** No Boundary Changes



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

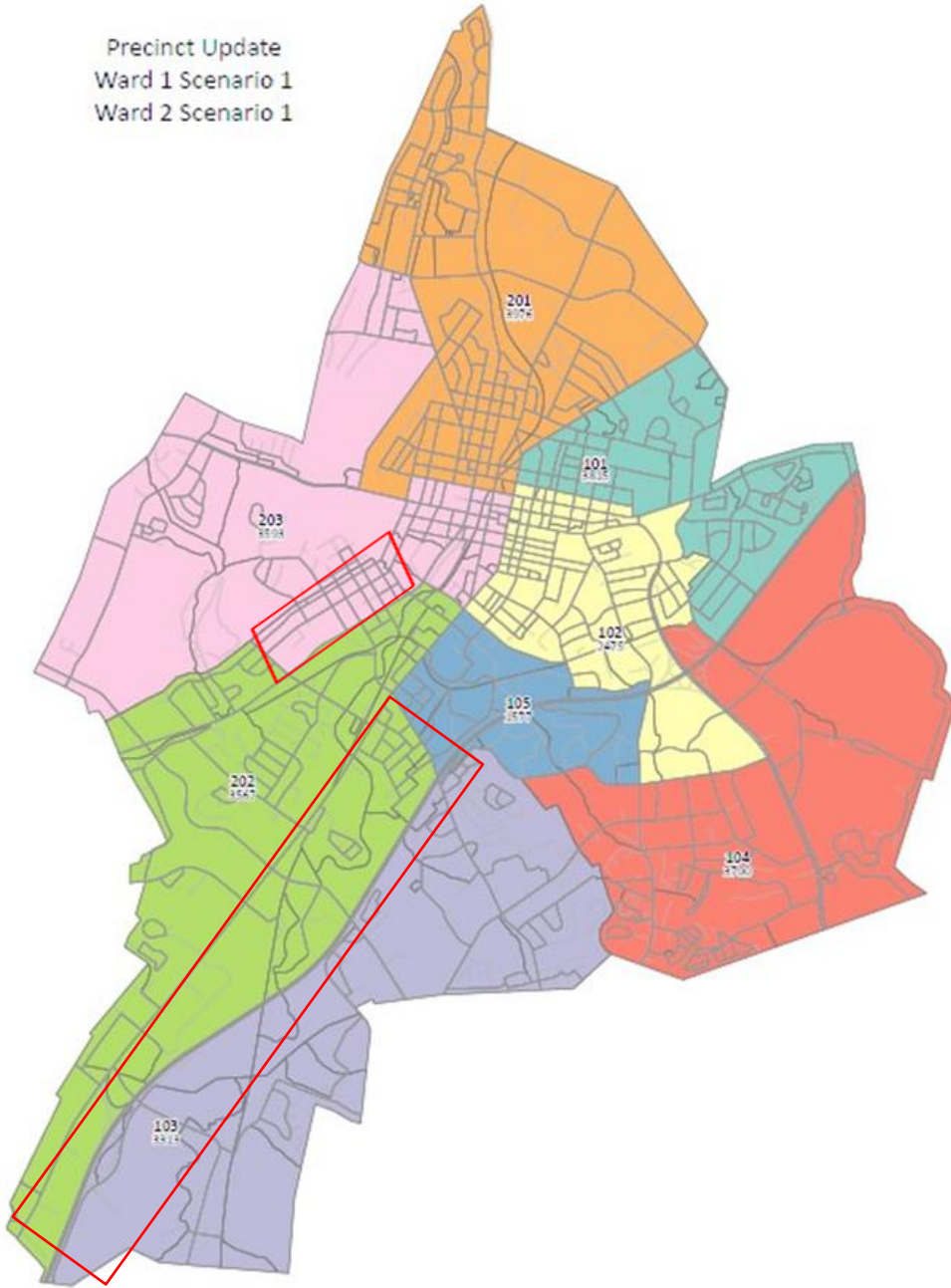


Key Issues

- **201 Waterman:** Adding voters north of Mount Clinton Pike from 203 THMS. Moving voters east of North Dogwood Drive and south of West Wolfe Street into 203 THMS.



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1

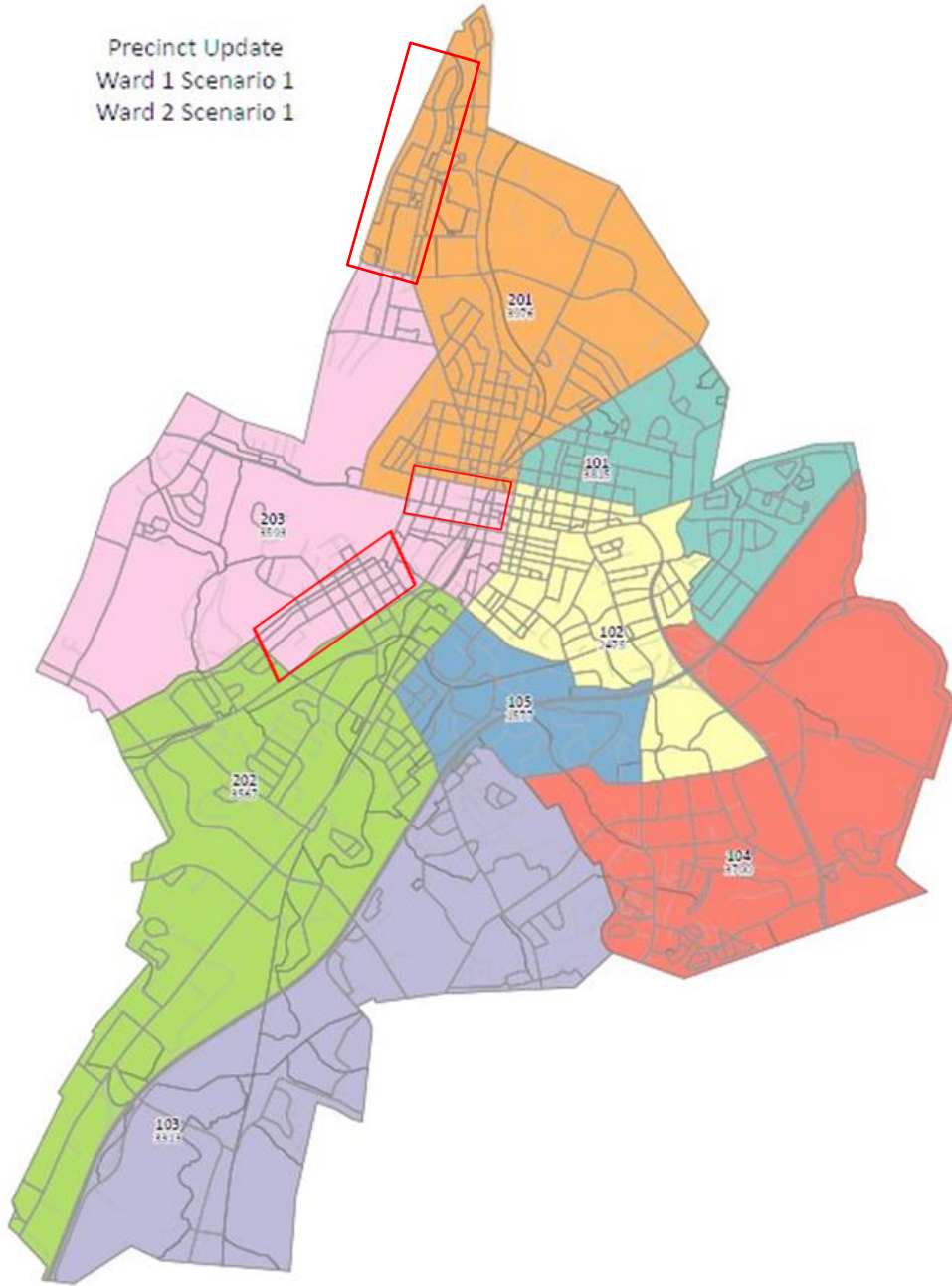


Key Issues

- **202 Keister:** Adding voters between North Main Street and Interstate 81 until Port Republic Road from 103 Stone Spring. Moving voters north of South Avenue and west of South High Street to 203 THMS.



Precinct Update
Ward 1 Scenario 1
Ward 2 Scenario 1



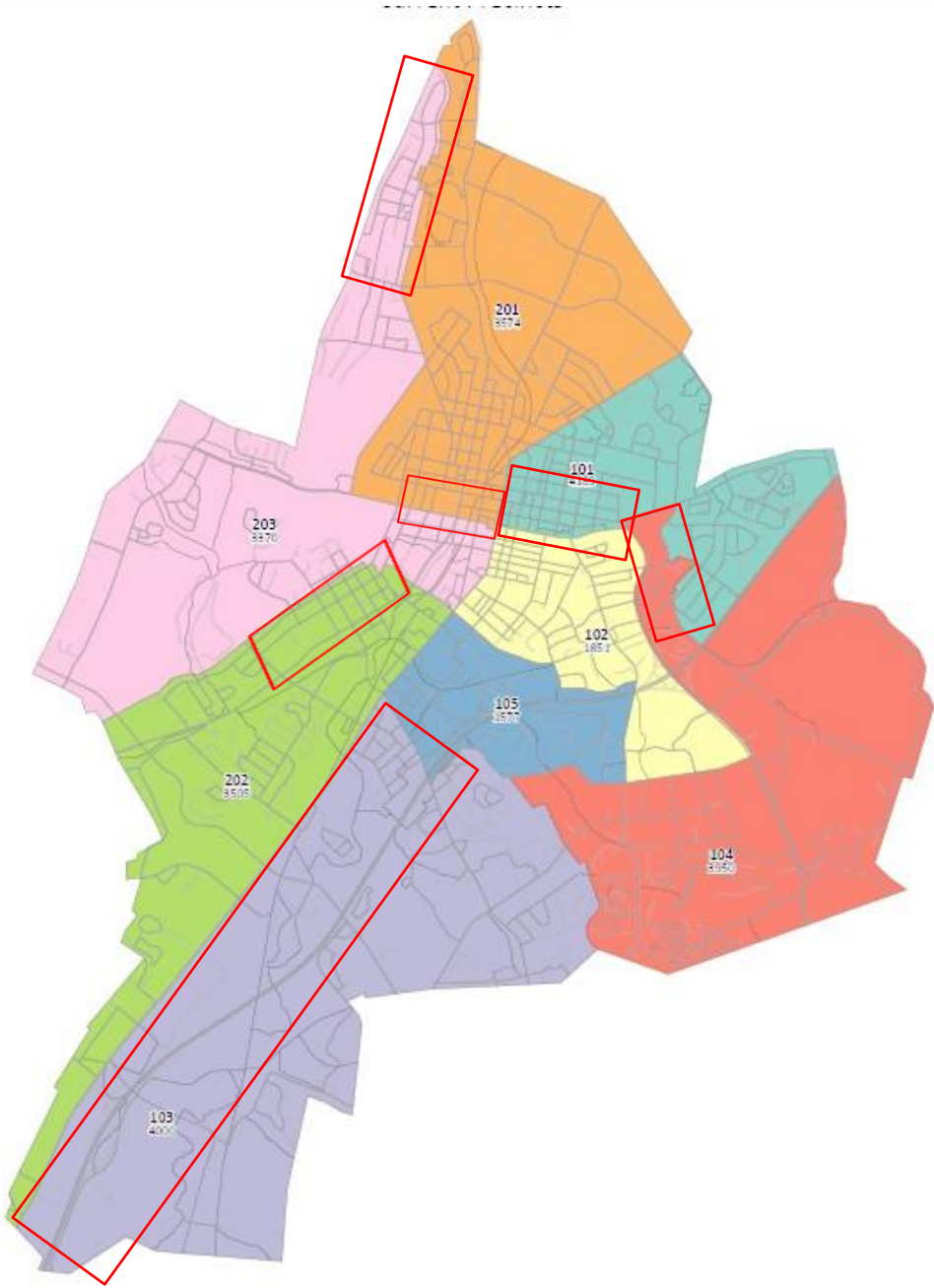
Key Issues

- **203 THMS:** Adding voters east of North Dogwood Drive and south of West Wolfe Street from 201 Waterman. Adding voters north of South Avenue and west of South High Street from 202 Keister. Moving voters north of Mount Clinton Pike to 201 Waterman.



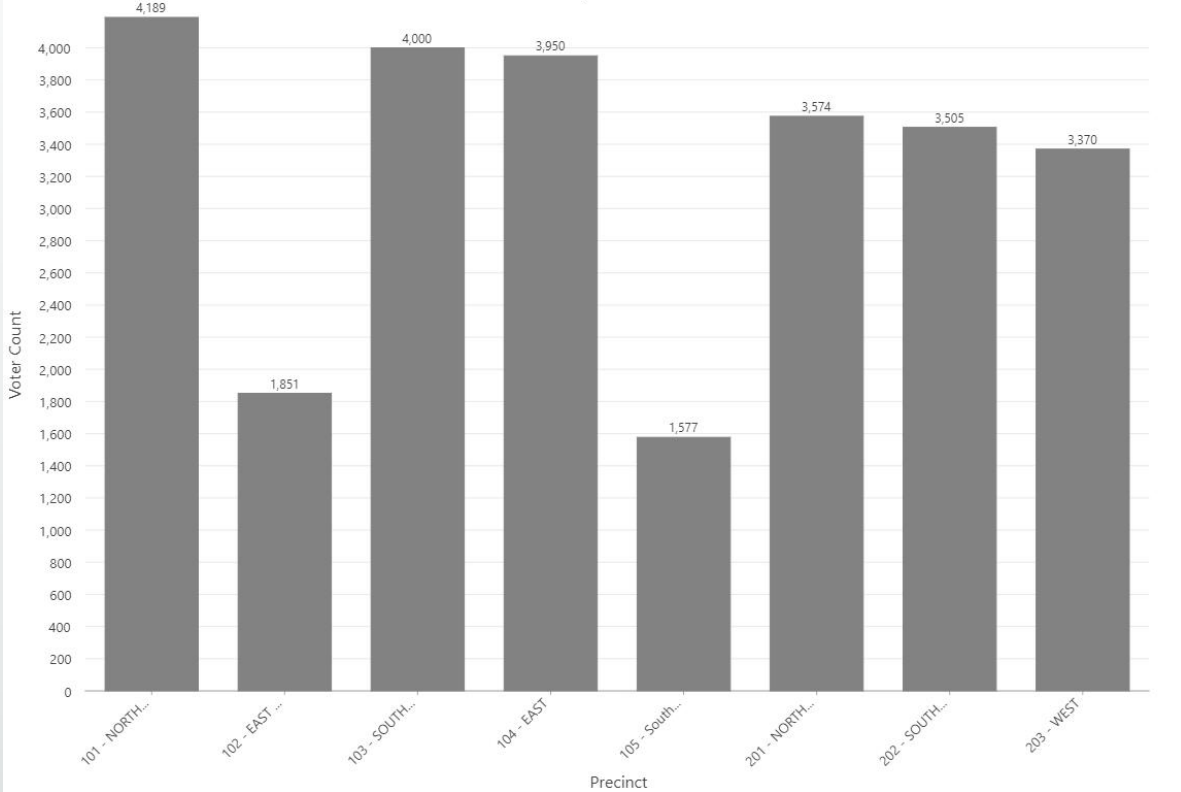
Key Issues

Current Map with change area overlay

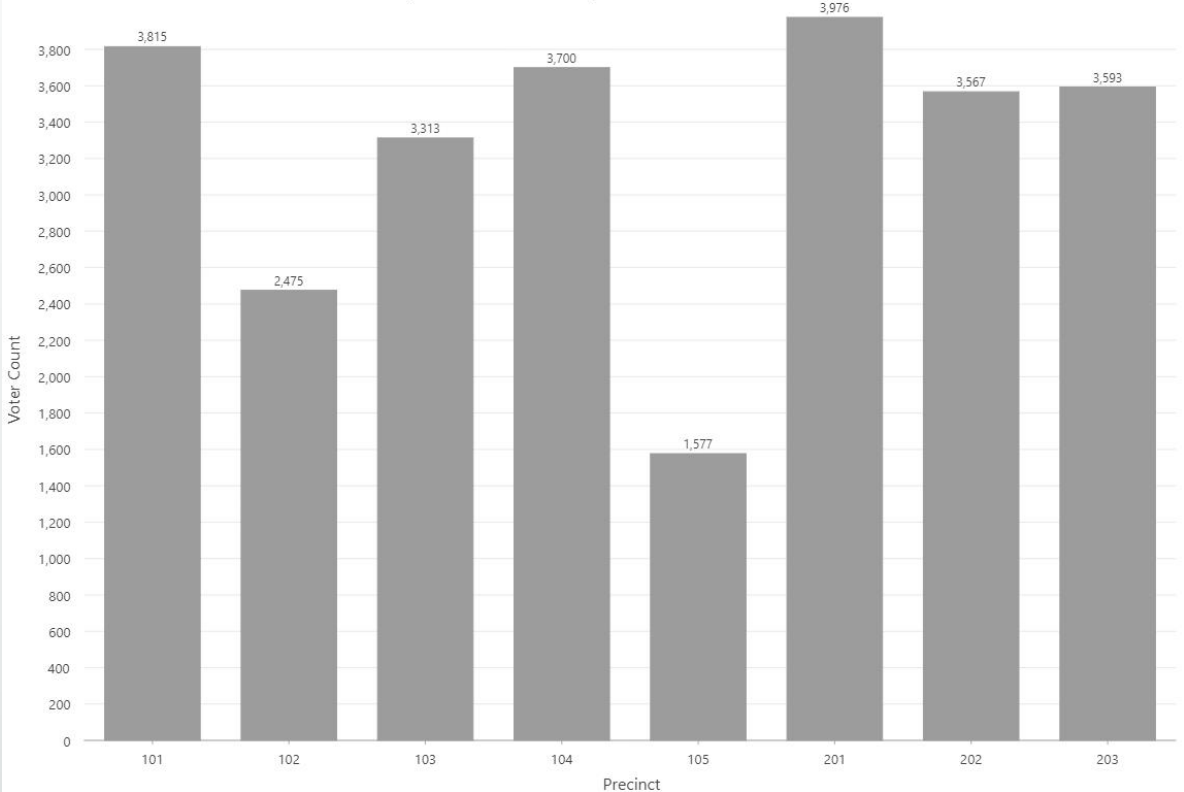


Key Issues

1. Voter Count by Precinct - Current



2. Voter Count by Precinct - Ward 1, Scenario 1 with Ward 2, Scenario 1



Key Issues

There are several factors that need to be addressed when choosing a polling location on JMU campus.

1. The polling place must be located within the boundaries of 105.
2. The space is compliant with American with Disabilities Act requirements for polling locations.
3. The location has available parking for voters, and staff.
4. There is at least one parking space that can be used for curbside parking that is within 150 feet of an entrance to the polling location.
5. The polling location is not located interior to the campus gates.
6. Convenience of location for voters on and off campus should be considered.
7. The location should be able to handle a high turn out election in terms of size.
8. The location needs to have availability throughout the year given the possibility that a special election could happen at any time.



Key Issues

Considering these factors staff has created a weighted number system for each precinct, starting from 1 to 5 with a total possible score of 25. The higher the score the more criteria a location meets to be an acceptable polling location.

Criteria:

1. Convenience for students
2. Convenience for off campus voters and staff
3. Meets state criteria
4. Availability
5. Size



Student Success Center

738 S Mason St, Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Criteria:

Convenience for students: 4

Convenience for off-campus and staff: 4

Meets state criteria: 1

Availability: 1

Size: 3

Total: 13



University Recreation Center (URec)

701 Driver Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Criteria:

Convenience for students: 3

Convenience for off-campus and staff: 3

Meets state criteria: 1

Availability: 1

Size: 5

Total: 13



Festival Conference and Student Center

1301 Carrier Dr, Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Criteria:

Convenience for students: 3

Convenience for off-campus and staff: 5

Meets state criteria: 4

Availability: 1

Size: 5

Total: 18



Atlantic Union Bank Center

645 University Blvd, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Criteria:

Convenience for students: 1

Convenience for off-campus and staff: 5

Meets state criteria: 5

Availability: 3

Size: 5

Total: 19



JMU X-Labs

298 Port Republic Rd, Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Criteria:

Convenience for students: 2

Convenience for off-campus and staff: 5

Meets state criteria: 5

Availability: 5

Size: 3

Total: 20



Godwin Hall

261 Bluestone Dr, Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Criteria:

Convenience for students: 5

Convenience for off-campus and staff: 3

Meets state criteria: 2

Availability: 5

Size: 5

Total: 20

Electoral Board voted 2-1 to recommend



Key Issues

The General Registrar believes that the recommended map and recommended JMU polling location addresses the stated parameters. While there could be population increase issues that could affect the number of registered voters in a few of these precincts in the coming years, the boundaries can always be adjusted if any precinct approaches 5,000 voters. There are a few potential issues with accessibility with Godwin Hall, but the General Registrar believes that working with JMU these issues can be addressed.



Key Issues

However, should there be a desire for more discussion on either Ordinance Amendments, the General Registrar recommends moving forward with a decision on a new polling location for JMU 105 first. As the 105 Precinct does not currently have an operational polling location it will be imperative to have one in place if there is Primary on June 21st or a Special Election. There is an alternate draft Ordinance Amendment that changes the 105 JMU polling location from the Convocation Center to Godwin Hall without changing the precinct and ward boundaries that can be approved.



Alternatives

- (a) Approve the Election Ordinance Amendments with new ward and precinct boundaries and Godwin Hall as polling location for 105, as recommended by Electoral Board
- (b) Approve the Election Ordinance Amendments with new ward and precinct boundaries and Godwin Hall as polling location for 105, with other provisions
- (c) Approve the Election Ordinance Amendments with new ward and precinct boundaries as recommended by Electoral Board and deny Godwin Hall as polling location for 105.
- (d) Approve the election ordinance amendment with Godwin Hall as the polling location for 105 and deny the amendments with new ward and precinct boundaries
- (e) Deny the Election Ordinance Amendments



Recommendation

The General Registrar recommends alternative (a) approve the Election Ordinance Amendments with new ward and precinct boundaries and Godwin Hall as polling location for 105, as recommended by Electoral Board





QUESTIONS?

