EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING NEW COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICT BOUNDARIES, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 124, FLORIDA STATUTES, AND THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION.

Objective: To obtain the Board’s approval of a Resolution establishing new county commission district boundaries for the purpose of distributing population among the five commission districts as nearly equal as practicable.

Considerations: The Constitution of the State of Florida requires that, after each decennial census, the Board of Commissioners are to divide the county into districts of contiguous territories as nearly equal in population as practicable, with one commissioner residing in each district elected as provided by law.

In late March of 2001, the U.S. Census Bureau released Census 2000 Redistricting Data for Collier County, pursuant to Public Law 94-171. It shows the total population for Collier County at 251,377 as of April 1, 2000; therefore, to achieve population equity, each district would have a population of approximately 50,275 persons. The growth experienced in Collier County since the last redistricting in 1995 (population was about 183,000) varied significantly among districts. (See Table 1 below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BCC District</th>
<th>Population in 2000</th>
<th>Ideal Population</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>49,840</td>
<td>50,275</td>
<td>- 0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>47,164</td>
<td>50,275</td>
<td>- 6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>57,712</td>
<td>50,275</td>
<td>+ 14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>40,662</td>
<td>50,275</td>
<td>- 19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 5</td>
<td>55,999</td>
<td>50,275</td>
<td>+ 11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>251,377</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Figures extracted from U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171).

On June 26, 2001, the Board directed staff to redraw the commission districts in order to comply with the one-person one-vote constitutional mandate. The Board specifically approved the following redistricting criteria: (1) the population of each district should be as similar as possible; (2) all districts should be as compact and regularly shaped as feasible; and (3) the incumbent Commissioner’s residence must remain in his or her current district. The Board has also expressed desire to achieve uniformity between the district boundaries of the School Board and the County Commission. Additionally, there are other considerations, mostly related to pre-clearance requirements, which must also be taken into account. These include: a)
avoid retrogression of minority voting strength; b) maintain communities of interest; c) minimize disruption to former districts; and, d) choose well-defined and easily recognizable boundaries.

Through a collaborative effort between the Community Development and Environmental Services Division, the County Attorney’s Office, the District School Board of Collier County, and the Supervisor of Elections Office, five proposed maps have been prepared, all of which comply with the Board of County Commissioner’s directive as well as the additional considerations noted above. The total population in the five commission districts - in their present configuration, and in each of the five proposals - is shown in Table 2, below.

**TABLE 2**  
Total Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BCC District</th>
<th>Existing Pop.</th>
<th>Map #1 Pop.</th>
<th>Map #2 Pop.</th>
<th>Map #3 Pop.</th>
<th>Map #4 Pop.</th>
<th>Map #5 Pop.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>49,840</td>
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<td>49,840</td>
<td>50,145</td>
<td>50,229</td>
<td>51,511</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>47,164</td>
<td>50,759</td>
<td>50,759</td>
<td>50,473</td>
<td>49,492</td>
<td>48,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>57,712</td>
<td>50,616</td>
<td>48,313</td>
<td>50,375</td>
<td>50,884</td>
<td>49,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>40,662</td>
<td>49,731</td>
<td>52,034</td>
<td>50,543</td>
<td>50,341</td>
<td>50,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>55,999</td>
<td>50,431</td>
<td>50,431</td>
<td>50,043</td>
<td>50,431</td>
<td>51,455</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>251,377</td>
<td>251,377</td>
<td>251,377</td>
<td>251,377</td>
<td>251,377</td>
<td>251,377</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Figures extracted from U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171).

Collier County is a “covered” jurisdiction under the Voting Rights Act of 1965. As such, Collier County must obtain pre-clearance before enforcing any redistricting plan. In order to obtain pre-clearance from the U.S. Department of Justice, the County must demonstrate that the new plan does not result in the retrogression of minority voting strength. This is ascertained by comparing minority population voting strength, as measured by voting age population, under the existing and newly adopted plan (a before and after comparison for all five proposed maps).

District 5 has, by far, the greatest minority population in Collier County. Although it does not qualify as a minority-majority district at this time, it is the district that warrants the closest scrutiny for possible retrogression of minority voting strength. As District 5 is presently configured, it has a total voting age population of 39,440, based on the 2000 Census. Of this total voting age population, 2,875 are identified as Black and 14,242 are identified as Hispanic. This means that in District 5, as it is presently configured, Blacks make up 7.3% of the voting age population and Hispanics comprise 36.1% of the voting age population. [It is important to note that “Hispanic” is an ethnicity, not a race; accordingly, a person may be of any race and also be of Hispanic ethnicity.] As indicated in the attached supporting materials, all five proposed maps result in an increase in these minority populations in District 5; conversely, none of the five proposed maps result in a retrogression of minority voting strength.

Staff has held three advertised public meetings to provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposed maps and related material and data, and to ask questions and give comments. The meetings
were held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on October 22, 2001 at the Golden Gate Community Center (4 persons attended); October 23, 2001 at the County Commission Boardroom (7 persons attended); and, October 24, 2001 at the Immokalee Community Park (12 persons attended). Two persons attended all three meetings. Many comments were received; some persons identified a map they preferred or disliked. A summary of the most substantive comments is provided below.

- The developments/population lying north of Immokalee Road and west of Collier Blvd., are different from the remainder of District 5 and do not belong there. Differences include race, age, income, voter-eligibility, type of community (gated vs. non-gated, golf course vs. non-golf course). It was stated that these differences resulted in the previous two District 5 county commissioners being elected from this area instead of from the Immokalee area.
- Everglades City area should not be moved into District 1 (Map #3) – the character and population of that area is dissimilar to Marco Island and East Naples; it is similar to the Immokalee area (income, education, rural character).
- The Henderson Creek area (triangle formed by Collier Blvd./U.S. 41/Manatee Rd.) should remain in District 5 - the population and school there is more similar to the Immokalee area.
- A retrogression analysis should be done for all five districts on all five proposed maps.
- An analysis should be done for all five districts on all five proposed maps regarding impact upon the registered voter population, not just voting age population.
- Map #4 was identified as the preferred map more than any other.

Also, questions were asked, and critical comments made, about public notice procedures. Some comments in Immokalee apply to County projects in general, not just redistricting: a) language barrier isn’t addressed – most notices are posted in English only; b) time is inadequate – more time is needed to review and offer comment; c) location is inadequate – need to include notice in the local newspaper (Immokalee Bulletin) and recognize that some persons do not read the Naples Daily News, and need to post notices in high-traffic areas (e.g. post office, certain businesses and institutions – including schools); and, d) communication limitations – need to recognize that the government channel (Channel 54) is not available on the cable television provider in Immokalee.

On November 8, a fourth advertised public meeting will be held at the Immokalee Community Park. During the Board’s hearing, staff will relay public comments received there, as well as from the County website, and from any other correspondence and communication otherwise received.

On October 15, 2001, the Black Affairs Advisory Board reviewed the redistricting maps and data. That Board did not have a quorum present, therefore, could not take a vote on this matter. However, individual members asked questions about: future growth in the County; permanent vs. part-time residents; impact upon minority voting strength of proposed Map #5; and, the role of the School Board in the redistricting process. There was one speaker; he discussed lower voter registration among certain minority
populations, the need to consider this in selecting new boundaries, the need to maximize minority-voting strength, and indicated his preference of Map #4 over Map #5.

On October 25, the Hispanic Affairs Advisory Board reviewed the redistricting maps and data. Members of that Board asked questions pertaining to: the redistricting process; creation of a District for Immokalee only; and, creation of a District for minority populations only. Members commented that having the redistricting materials presented to them at their meeting didn’t give adequate time to review and digest it; and, the developments lying north of Immokalee Road and west of Collier Blvd. are different from the remainder of District 5 and should not be included in District 5. Two speakers addressed the Board. One speaker provided similar comments as he made before the Black Affairs Advisory Board, and suggested the Board consider endorsing maps that show District 5 excluding the areas lying north of Immokalee Road and west of Collier Blvd.; the second speaker noted the increase in total Hispanic population but also noted many are not eligible to vote due to residency status; expressed concern about dilution of registered-voter Hispanic population; and, said Map #4 will reduce the number of registered voters in District 3. The Board passed a unanimous motion stating they do not want to see the minority vote diluted, therefore, prefer Maps #1 and #2; and, they do not want District 5 to extend west of Collier Blvd., north of Immokalee Road.

The District School Board of Collier County discussed Redistricting at their October 18, 2001 meeting but took no formal action. The general consensus of the School Board was to support whichever map the BCC chooses - though some concern was expressed over Map #3, which incorporates the Everglades City area into District 1 - and to wait until public input is received at the three evening meetings, then bring this item back for discussion on November 1. During the BCC hearing, staff will relay the comments received at this November 1 meeting.

**Fiscal Impact:** The cost of publishing the Resolution once a week for two consecutive weeks in the Naples Daily News, as required by Section 124.02, Florida Statutes.

**Growth Management Impact:** This item has no Growth Management impact.

**Environmental Issues:** Not applicable.

**Historical/Archaeological Impact:** Not applicable.

**Planning Services Staff Recommendation:** That the Board adopt one of the five attached Resolutions establishing new county commission district boundaries, and authorize the County Attorney’s Office to pre-clear the new district boundaries through the U.S. Department of Justice.

**EAC Recommendation:** Not applicable.

**CCPC Recommendation:** Not applicable.

PREPARED BY: _______________________________          DATE: ___________
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Chief Planner, Comprehensive Planning Section

APPROVED BY: _______________________________    DATE: ___________    
John M. Dunnuck III, Interim Administrator  
Community Dev. & Environmental Svcs.

Ex Sum map adoption F, Redistricting dwl