The establishment and maintenance of election or representation districts within counties and cities has its supporters and its detractors. Citizens, elected city and county commissioners or council members, scholars, and political operatives have been discussing the pros and cons of local government election or representation districts since the founding of the country. Whether called wards, parishes, or city council or commission districts, they exist across the nation at the local government level. Historically, local government districts, such as wards and even counties, were core building blocks for state and federal election districts. With the growth of computing technology, especially the widespread adoption of geographic information systems (GIS), along with court support for the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its amendments, the former political unit hierarchical structure is no longer the operative model. Today census blocks have become the fundamental building units of districting at all governmental levels (Katz and Mark, 2000). Spatial (and thus political and ideological) resolution has increased tremendously. Many decry the resulting meandering district lines as it gives those in power the ability to manipulate district configurations for narrow political interests (Monmonier, 2001). Some suggest that the level of reasonable discourse in elected bodies is declining, while the volume of that discourse is increasing, to the detriment of the interests of the moderate majority within the electorate (Redistricting, Ask Dr. Dave, 2004).

My purpose here is to share my experience and districting ‘expertise’ gained over twenty-five years as a geographic consultant to a half-dozen cities and counties in southeast Florida. In particular, I will focus on three communities in Broward County where I was initially retained to help each establish their first districts in the 1980s and have then advised them on an approximately 3-4 year redistricting cycle.
An Introduction

In the early 1980s a colleague and I were brought into a school districting debate by a citizens group seeking to contest a school redistricting proposal before the Broward County School Board. At that time the Broward County School Board was responsible for a student membership of about 130,000. Each year school attendance zones needed reauthorization and in many cases readjustment due to student population dynamics. When new schools were being opened, the redoing of attendance lines became a very public matter. The upshot of my public involvement in challenging the school district's 1981 redistricting or boundary plan was that a few months after the 1981 boundaries were established, having been changed little by direct citizen involvement, I was retained by the school board to assist staff in the preparation of the annual school boundary review.(1) A secondary effect of my extensive public exposure on school districting was the invitation to work with local communities in their efforts to implement city council and commission districts. This is the focus of this discourse.

Many cities, counties, and other local elected boards do not have district representation. The members of these general government and special purpose bodies are elected at-large with no constraints on where candidates live within the broader jurisdiction. The advantages and disadvantages of having district representation and/or election of local council and commission board members are well debated. They revolve around issues of board members' level of parochialism, around whether a board member will take a more narrow (district) view of an issue or a broader community wide (city, county, etc.) view. A corollary to this is the possibility (without districts) for geographic concentration of the residences of the members of the board with its implications for geographic and socioeconomic favoritism. In rapidly growing southeast Florida, this issue was central to the debate on the establishment of city and county election districts. Many southeast Florida cities were founded and grew rapidly in the mid to late 20th Century (Schultz, 1990). The councils and commissions were initially elected at-large. Often, when founded, the cities were small and their residents were socioeconomically similar. As newer and bigger residential developments
came on-line in these modest sized communities, either through development of existing vacant city land or through territorial annexation, the political power structure was seen as favoring the earlier neighborhoods and residential subdivisions. For example, the arrival in central and north Broward County of very large retirement condominium complexes in the 1960s and 1970s resulted, by the 1980s, in several local cities having two or three of their five board members living in one of these large complexes. In other cases, the members of the board were more geographically dispersed, but still within the older city neighborhoods.

With respect to the retirement complexes, a contributing factor to the interest in establishing city council districts was that most of the residents of these retirement communities were registered voters organized and motivated by internal political activists, and thus voter turnouts were very high compared to the rest of the city. The lack of elected representation from the newer subdivisions and areas of the city was obvious, but more importantly, the general impression was that the 'rest' of the city mattered little to the incumbents future tenure because the public that voted was spatially and culturally concentrated - the many Century Villages and other large condominium complexes in southeast Florida being a prime example. This voting clout within the retirement condominium complexes was especially pronounced given that most local governments in Florida elect their board members in early March, not in the general November election for state and national representatives. Voter turnout is usually low and thus organized voter blocs are very effective.

The impact of these factors led to more elderly councils and commissions and they were perceived to have more narrow interests than the community at-large. Thus the 'good government' movement became increasingly supportive of 'districting'. Citizen organizations, including the local chapters of the League of Women Voters, and community activists lobbied for change. Many communities placed the issue of districts before the voters. Some chose representation by district but with election at-large, others went for election of council members and commissioners by district. In either case, residence within a district’s boundary was a must in order to stand for that seat.
Once city charters were amended to require districts, the geographic definition of these districts for board approval had to proceed. Because of my visibility in the annual establishment of the Broward County School District’s (and to a lesser extent Palm Beach County Schools) school attendance zones and my professional position as an urban geographer, several cities contacted me directly for advice while others sent out official requests for proposals (RFPs) that I and others received. These cities did not ask their city managers or their internal planning units to directly develop the required election or representation districts in order to remove city staff from the politics of district formation. In fact, as I was to learn later, some city charter revisions made to implement districts included a requirement that a ‘professor of geography’ at a local higher education institution or other similar reference, be retained for this work. The upshot was that initially I became the ‘districting’ consultant for four north Broward cities and have been retained on a periodic cycle by three of them since the initial establishment of election or representation districts in the mid 1980s. Since those initial involvements, I have also advised the Broward County League of Women Voters, several additional city and county Charter Review Boards, and other city councils on the establishment or review of districting matters.

**Districting Criteria**

From the beginning of my work with cities on internal districts I laid out rational standards or criteria for city commission districts, these criteria are widely accepted by the public and many scholars (Morrill, 1981; Common Cause, 2005). Several of these standards are also embodied in our legal system. They are:

1. **Equality in population.** This is now the law of the land as set down by the courts. At lower levels of government and population size there is more tolerance of reasonable population imbalance. A 5 to 10 percent deviation around the average district population has been considered reasonable in many applications. Pure population balance/equality may in fact be too artificial in the face of the following concerns.
2. **Spatial contiguity and compactness.** In recent redistrictings at the state and national level this criterion has not been followed in many notorious cases, yet the voting public is generally supportive of this criterion. The argument is that space matters, that the ‘tyranny of space’ is real and that ‘unreal’ shapes and large distances constrain effective identification and understanding of your local, state, and federal representatives. Others argue that with the internet and other means of quick and relatively painless communication, the spatial orderliness criterion is fast waning as a legitimate criterion.

3. **Integrity of communities of interest.** This criterion suggests ‘communities’ should be kept together where possible. By law, race is the dominant community, but age, non race ethnicity, income, and other definitions of community have been seen by the public as important. Some would argue that today, communities of interest are less based on geographic nearness, but are more a function of social networks covering larger territories than a relatively small geographically defined political unit. For local government matters such as the provision of parks and recreation opportunities, police and emergency services, and local land use regulations and controls, geographic nearness seems to be a desired locally relevant definition of community.

4. **Consideration for the interests of sitting commissioners.** This criterion is more controversial. Common Cause, for example, states on its webpage (commoncause.org) “The redistricting process shall be “incumbent blind””. Since, in the case of cities and counties in Florida, and in most communities nationwide, the elected body itself establishes its district configuration, the incumbent blind criterion is highly unlikely to survive long enough to become a recommended plan to a local city council. Also, some would argue (Morrill, 1981, Monmonier, 2001) that incumbency gives local voters more power in the competitive political arena and that almost all incumbents want (and try) to serve their local constituents interests. Why should a district’s population give away this advantage?
5. Change existing districts as little as possible. To meet population equality or other necessary goals district boundaries will often need to shift. Racial dilution is a particularly problematic issue in city level redistricting, especially when annexations or major new residential developments must be absorbed within a set number of districts. Making as few boundary shifts as are necessary to satisfy the other criteria is typically seen as very desirable.

In the following sections I give a general overview of how the districting process proceeded in three Broward County cities. Finally, I examine how the above rational standards can be assessed in these three specific cases that span a period of 20 to 25 years, from initial district establishment through multiple redistrictings.

**Coconut Creek**

My first city districting work was for the City of Coconut Creek, FL in late 1983. The city was founded in 1967 and its population had grown to over 13,000 by 1983. The area of the city was expanding as additional territory was brought into the city by annexation and this was expected to continue for several decades. Broward County government and the county's state legislative delegation were in favor of incorporation of all urban areas within the county within existing or new municipalities. This process is continuing today and by decade end should be nearly complete. Table 1 presents 1980 population and socioeconomic characteristics for the three cities discussed herein and for Broward County as a whole. Table 2 presents these characteristics for the year 2000.

The original City of Coconut Creek was established due to one major residential development, now known as South Creek. It was a traditional suburban development primarily of detached single-family homes surrounded by areas used primarily for winter crops, horses and cattle. The first major expansion of population beyond 3,000 or so in South Creek was the development of the Wynmoor (Rossmoor) retirement condominium complex. This complex was developed in stages, eventually having a population of over 7,000. The city council of the early 1980s had 3 of the 5 council members living in Wynmoor.
Another major developer was in the initial development stages of a PUD known as The Township, which was going to be developed in a series of phases including townhouses, garden apartments, and single family detached units. The upshot was that voters decided it was appropriate to move to representation by district in order to allow for all communities to be represented on the council. The mayor (selected by the council on a rotating basis) lived in Wynmoor, and he and the other members of the city council were supportive of 'districting'.

The city charter was amended to incorporate district representation, but election by the whole was retained. All voters vote for the candidate of their choice in each of the five districts. Candidates must reside in the district they wish to represent. Clearly this was easier
Table 2: Characteristics of North Broward Cities, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Resident Population</th>
<th>Percent Black</th>
<th>Square Miles (2000)</th>
<th>Median Age</th>
<th>Persons Per Household</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Percent Owner Occupied</th>
<th>Percent 25 + with College Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coconut Creek</td>
<td>43,566</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>12.</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>$43,980</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Lauderdale</td>
<td>32,264</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>$40,050</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deerfield Beach</td>
<td>64,583</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>16.</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>$34,041</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward County</td>
<td>1,623,018</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>$41,691</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census 2000, accessed at census.gov web site

to accomplish politically than election by district and it allowed the existing council members from Wynmoor to support the districting initiative in the name of good (representative) government. It was known that with districts it was likely that the number of Wynmoor residents on the council would decline, however, Wynmoor residents (and all other city voters) would retain their influence in selecting each commissioner.

The Coconut Creek City Charter requires a Redistricting Board be established whenever the population imbalance of the existing districts becomes significant. Currently they define that as when the difference between the largest of the five districts’ population and the smallest exceeds 10 percent of the city total. For example, if the city’s population estimate reached 40,000, the average district should have 8,000 residents. If, however, one district was estimated to have grown to
11,500 (28.75%) and another was estimated at 7,500 (18.75%), the
difference would be 10% of the estimated population within the city (2).
Redistricting would be triggered and the commission would constitute a
Redistricting Board by appointing 1 member each.

The Redistricting Board is established by vote of the council and
it then has 90 days to submit a redistricting recommendation to the
commission for their consideration.(3) I have been retained as
consultant to this board each time it has been constituted. This has
occurred about every two years in the mid to late 1980s and every three
or four years since. My tasks are to estimate the population of the city
by geographic neighborhood and then develop alternative district
configurations based on the general districting criteria identified above.
Coconut Creek requires that population estimates (actually, a forecast)
for the month of the forthcoming election (March) be prepared and used
in the Board’s deliberations.

My approach to developing sub city population estimates is to
update census figures using the county property appraiser NAL file
(Prosperi and Schultz, 1990). The NAL (owner name, mailing address,
and legal property description) file is carefully constructed for property
assessment and taxing purposes by the county property appraiser and it
includes housing units organized by range, township, section,
subdivision, block and lot. Applying appropriate persons per housing
unit multipliers gives very defensible, non census year, small area
population estimates. Updated persons per housing unit factors are
generated using direct methods such as a resident phone survey or from
information on residents from a condominium or homeowner
association. Indirect methods include using U.S. Census and BEBR
average persons per housing unit multipliers for the appropriate housing
type.

The Redistricting Board is an official, although temporary, unit
of the City of Coconut Creek government and thus its meetings are open
to the public. Both the city clerk and the city attorney attend each board
meeting. The meetings are run by the Board chair (selected at the first
meeting by Board members) following a published agenda and meeting
minutes are prepared for subsequent approval. This approach to
redistricting has worked extremely well. After the first two districtings,
members of the city commission rarely attend Board meetings as observers and the Board, with one redistricting exception, has unanimously approved a redistricting plan for recommendation to the commission, in all cases within its 90-day legal existence. The commission in turn has approved the Board’s recommendation. In the early years the council actively debated the merits of the recommendation, more recently they have approved the recommendation in a straightforward manner. Establishment of new or revised districts requires two public readings and commission votes on a specific plan.

**North Lauderdale**

In 1984, I was selected by the City of North Lauderdale to assist in the development of council districts. Like Coconut Creek, they had undergone a charter revision that required five districts be established. However, only the voters within a district were to choose their representative to the council. As usual, the mayor was to be selected on a rotating basis from the five elected district commissioners. The charter revision also required that a geographer from a local educational institution be retained. This person was to provide expertise and information in the determination of districts and their revisions. Why a local geographer? Again, I attribute this to the public exposure I received as an adversary and then as a continuing consultant to the local county (Broward) school board.

The approach of North Lauderdale to arriving at districts is vastly different from that of Coconut Creek. The initial presentation of population estimates and districting alternatives occurs at scheduled commission workshops and I am expected to take direction from the commission itself. This involves considerable interaction with the city manager and planning director as commission members typically have differing opinions on districting issues and many alternative district concepts are brought forward. The several city managers with whom I have worked and I eventually established that outside of public workshops and commission meetings the commissioners communicate through the city manager to me. However, I need to be directly responsive to critique and suggestions at the workshops and commission meetings. Typically, it requires more time to complete the redistricting
process than in the case of Coconut Creek and there is more public dissension amongst the commissioners. Often the mayor has been ineffective in bringing closure to a particular debate issue. In one redistricting effort, my recommendation, even after considerable revision suggested by commissioners' comments, was not followed and I had to state formally that I could not recommend or support the outcome of a pending commission decision changing district boundaries. My main objection was with their overriding concern with compact geography to the extent that it resulted in significant population imbalance across the districts. Nevertheless, I was thanked for my efforts and three years later was again retained to assist the city in redistricting!

My most recent redistricting consultation with North Lauderdale took over a year to complete. Normally the process is complete in no more than 5 months. I was retained to develop the standard five election districts. In the process of a series of workshop presentations revolving around the impact of a major city annexation on the established districts, the issue of electing the mayor as an at-large (elected city wide) officer came to the fore. After several rounds of districting alternatives (over a half dozen were presented), the commission decided to stop the process while they went to the voters to seek a change in the mayoral selection procedure. The proposal passed (to be implemented at the next city election) and thus the number of districts was reduced to 4 with the mayor elected at-large. Clearly, at the minimum, the commission was now faced with deciding which existing commissioners would be in the same district after redistricting. This again prolonged the process, but eventually one commissioner volunteered to be 'doubled-up' and the other affected commissioner agreed and the redistricting was accomplished. The newly annexed area was split between two districts rather than force one existing commissioner to absorb the full impact of the new voters. The volunteer for doubling-up went on to become the new at-large mayor, and one of the commissioners absorbing part of the newly annexed area was not re-elected.
Deerfield Beach

Deerfield Beach adopted districts in 1988. In this case, I was selected after an RFP went out and the contenders were ranked on expertise/experience, local knowledge, and proposed costs after their presentations at a commission meeting. For the first establishment of districts, a committee was formed. Each commissioner appointed one member. My tasks were the usual: develop population estimates for the election year in question by geographic neighborhood and prepare alternative district configurations. Deerfield Beach had chosen to have representation, not election, by district for four commissioners with the mayor running city wide. Again I used the annual county property appraiser NAL file and city certificate of occupancy records to obtain updated (from the 1980 census) housing unit counts by subdivision type. As usual, these were converted into population estimates using appropriate persons per housing unit factors/multipliers obtained as described before.

As the Districting Committee neared the end of its work and had accepted my report that contained five separate alternatives for the city commission to consider, the city commission decided to ask the voters to approve closed districts, i.e., the four district commissioners would be elected by the voters in their district as in the case of North Lauderdale. After the closed districts proposal passed my work with the Districting Committee resumed. Because the districts were closed, that is, registered voters only vote for their district’s commissioner (and the at-large mayor), the city clerk suggested that the districts follow existing precinct lines (boundaries) so that ballots could be easily prepared by precinct. This request initiated a review by the Districting Committee of the previously developed and accepted district alternatives and several were eliminated, and others modified. Using existing precincts as building blocks for city commission districts is difficult as precincts are typically too large a unit when seeking population balance across districts. In practice, some precincts must be split between districts. This was the case in North Lauderdale as well. (4)

After considering precinct lines, the committee forwarded several alternatives to the city commission with a weak recommendation for a favorite. The final decision on districts was reached by the commission
after well attended public hearings and strong discussion. The debate revolved heavily around the communities of interest criterion. Deerfield Beach commissioners and residents focused on how to protect specific communities’ probability of being represented in the forthcoming election. At issue was keeping the large Century Village retirement complex whole within a district and at the same time not diluting what was perceived as the black community’s district by separating the spatially concentrated 18 percent black population of the city into several districts. In addition the eastern, original, beach oriented, white middle class part of the city wanted to remain whole. These issues were resolved by commissioners and residents agreeing that generally north-south district boundary lines best accomplished these goals. Figure 1 presents the latest districts discussed more fully below.

In the four redistrictings since then, the city has not reconstituted a Districting Committee. I worked more closely with the city manager

**Figure 1 City of Deerfield Beach Commission Districts.**

| City of Deerfield Beach 2004 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Black (Deviation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District A</td>
<td>18,261</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District B</td>
<td>19,557</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District C</td>
<td>19,772</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District D</td>
<td>18,284</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Author.*
than I did in the other cases and he interacted with the commissioners as work progressed. My presentations to the Deerfield Beach City Commission have generated considerable public and political comment and attendance at commission meetings during one of the redistrictings spilled out of the ample commission chambers onto the patio and lawn surrounding the main entrance. The evening deliberations were long and contentious as individuals came to the podium and spoke regarding their preferences and views on the alternatives. Like North Lauderdale, the Deerfield Beach commission prefers to critically examine alternatives at workshops and regular commission meetings and then send me back to my den with specific requests. In these situations I continually remind myself it is the map that they wish ‘improved’, not me...

Summary Analysis

What can be generalized from my many experiences in city level redistricting in a rapidly growing region? Is there a ‘best’ plan for each community? What makes one city’s process and results different or similar from another’s?

Fundamentally, I was always aware that my immediate goal was to help each city reach closure on the formation and maintenance of their council or commission districts. The criteria postulated above formed the backdrop to my participation in the political redistricting process. My primary concern was always to achieve reasonable population balance across districts. Often, members of the districting boards, city staff, or members of the commissions were confused on ‘who’ was being counted as population. The matter of U.S. citizenship, registered to vote locally, or seasonal visitor/resident status had to be discussed. The law requires residency in the jurisdiction, noting else, in order for a person to ‘count’ in the population equality figures – neither age, citizenship, nor registered to vote matter. Seasonal residents self-determine their primary residence when they fill out their census form, register to vote, and file for Florida’s Homestead Property Exemption and associated Save Our Homes tax relief. Clearly, the latter is a strong incentive to declare their Florida home as their primary residence.
Reasonable population balance has been readily accepted by the parties involved in (re)districting with the one exception noted above. Once past the definition of who is being counted and how the data were developed, little debate is focused on population numbers. Spatial and community identity concerns drive the redistricting boards and city commissions to seek compact districts where feasible. Trade-offs on spatial compactness (but not contiguity) for better communities of interest identification are often made. The configuration of District A on the Coconut Creek map (Figure 2) has a long vertical ‘pipe’ on the western side of the city in order to avoid placing the southern part of District B, which is part of a condominium retirement complex, within District A. This spatial configuration has existed from the initial formation of districts, although the size of the ‘pipe’ has grown over time in order to balance

Figure 2 2004 Coconut Creek Commission Districts.

Source: City of Coconut Creek.
district populations.

The Coconut Creek districting boards also are sensitive to the impact of revisions on 'their' commissioner. This often leads to a good government discussion on the spatial definition of community versus the self interest of commission members. When the commission itself is reviewing the alternative plans, this issue is always there and often is discussed openly.

The change as little as possible criterion is typically brought up in defense of a sitting commissioner's interests. One reason little district change is not a top issue is that the cause for the redistricting is always imbalanced population growth in the existing districts or a major annexation of territory and associated population into the city. Major boundary changes are thus required, emanating in a domino effect from the parts of the city most impacted by growth or nearest to the annexations.

In one view of a rational world, a local independent public board might be asked to do the redistricting plan for each city. Given the above criteria they might reach an 'ideal' district formulation for commissioners to approve. Could this be reality? I think not. From my experience, each city has its own dynamic. Coconut Creek can be categorized as an upper middle class city. Of the three cities today, it has the highest household income, highest percent of its homes owner occupied, and highest percent of the adult population with college degrees (Table 2). Its city government, commission, and redistricting board are highly regarded as examples of good government. The acceptance of the highly ordered internal redistricting process is high.

North Lauderdale, founded in 1963, is more of a working class community. Using year 2000 census data, the proportion of the population black (35.2%) and other minorities is high and home ownership lower (63.7%) than in the other cities (Table 2). Household income is just below the county average, and comparatively, persons per household unit is high (2.99) and median age is very low (30.5). The city has evolved from a small relatively homogenous community to one with great variety in ethnicity and income while still maintaining its strong young family orientation. The commission has often been factious and mayoral leadership less strong. The commissioners prefer to roll up
their sleeves at workshops and commission meetings and shift neighborhoods from one district to another even in the presence of obvious population or other constraints. The most recent redistricting (2004) split a major territorial annexation at the southeast corner of the city between two districts (A and B) at the same time that the number of districts was being reduced from five to four. (Figure 3)

As previously mentioned this splitting of the new area was done to share the impact of the new voters rather than have them impact only one sitting commissioner. Several alternative district shapes were reviewed. The one chosen was favored by the two sitting commissioners living in the new proposed District A. One of the two was expected to run for the new city wide mayor position and the other felt this was the best alternative shape for the revised District A that also met the other

Figure 3 City of North Lauderdale District Map.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District A</td>
<td>9,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District B</td>
<td>10,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District C</td>
<td>9,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District D</td>
<td>9,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38,338</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author.
Schultz discussed criteria.

Deerfield Beach, is the oldest (chartered in 1925) of the three cities and the only one with a shoreline along the Atlantic coast. Periodically it has expanded to the west and more recently to the south. The older established neighborhoods versus the newer subdivisions may be too strong a dichotomy to make, but the commission does break out that way from time to time. With four districts and an at-large mayor for all the years of districting, the formation and maintenance of north/south district boundaries has been a goal, modified from time-to-time in the western areas of the city to accommodate subdivision based communities of interest. (Figure 1) Most recently, the city manager and most powerful commissioners prefer to ‘guide’ the alternatives presented for public commission meeting consumption. My work and opinion is viewed as setting the parameters within which the boundaries can be set. I seem to have veto power over the most egregious plans, but I use it in measured amounts. (5) Again, my goal is to achieve a districting plan that meets the basic districting criteria, but most significantly, one that will also pass the commission. Reality drives the show, rationality rides shotgun.
References


Monmonier, M., Bushmanders & Bullwinkles, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2001


FOOTNOTES:

(1) Although our efforts to address school boundary issues in 1981 had little outward affect on the Board’s decision that year, I was asked to meet with the newly established Boundary Review Committee whose task was to make policy recommendations to the Board to guide the annual school (re)districting process. This committee was instrumental in bringing openness and modern analytical methods into the deliberations underlying the annual process of proposed changes to public school boundaries/attendance zones.

(2) Annual county and city level population estimates are prepared by the Population Program of the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida under contract with the State of Florida. In addition Coconut Creek updates its population estimates using certificates of occupancy issued since the last redistricting and appropriate persons per housing unit factors.

(3) The Redistricting Board is appointed for 90 days beginning in early August and ending in late October (or very early November) preceding the forthcoming March election so that the city commission can establish the new districts by ordinance in time for the January filing of commission candidates.

(4) Precinct boundaries are usually adjusted after state and federal redistricting after the decennial U.S. Census. When closed local government election districts exist they should be part of the precinct rationalization (redoing) process that the county supervisor of elections undertakes in cooperation with the county’s city clerks. However, as is the case here, if closed city election districts are changed after the county precinct rationalization following the census, then the issue of split precincts again arises.

(5) The convoluted shape to Districts 1, 2 and 3 boundaries in the south central area of the city was needed in order to get a majority commission vote at the latest redistricting. Three of the commissioners had specific concerns that had to be addressed.