

J. ADDRESSING BOUNDARY DESIGNATION CONFLICTS

1. Establishing Criteria for Addressing Boundary Conflicts or Boundary Designations that Split Neighborhoods

Neighborhood council boundaries could be formed, and conflicts resolved, with reference to a number of existing city departments. For example, the Commission could use the 35 community planning districts created by the Department of Planning, since staff is assigned to the areas and is familiar with boundary issues. Another option would be to refer to the existing 15 City Council districts and divide them into neighborhood council districts. These methods would be relatively easy, but may not work to provide the citizens of the neighborhood council districts the sense of community that will make NC boundaries meaningful to historic neighborhoods.

The neighborhood councils could be empowered to internally address boundary differences. This system would allow neighborhoods to maintain compact and cohesive areas. This method has been used in other cities where organizers literally went door to door and asked residents their understanding of neighborhood boundaries.

Finally, a body could be formed for the sole purpose of resolving conflict. This body should be independent from City Council control, like a commission appointed by the mayor, or an Office of Neighborhoods.

The key is to create neighborhoods that the citizens will feel connected with and which make sense geographically. The lines should be established to insure that individuals living within the boundaries share interests and social commonalities. These boundaries may in some instances overlap. The Charter needs to develop a mechanism to insure fair resolution of this inherent conflict.

2. Establishing Boundaries and Criteria for Addressing Issues that Intersect Neighborhood Council Boundaries

One option would be to establish an Office of Neighborhoods which would not only help with determining how to draw lines and resolve conflicts while also addressing issues which affect more than one neighborhood.

There could also be a mandatory alternative dispute resolution process (ADR) prior to review by the mayor's office, or binding. Some of the local mediation services have mediators who specialize in all types of legal matters, and mediation is generally quite effective. Arbitration could also be utilized.

3. Charter Alternatives

a. Boundary Designation

- 1.) Mayor And City Council Establish Boundary Criteria
- 2.) City Planning Department Establishes Boundary Criteria
- 3.) Neighborhoods Establish Boundary Criteria
- 4.) Independent Commission Establishes Boundary Criteria

b. Boundary Designation Disputes

- 1.) Create a Department of Neighborhood Organizations
- 2.) Neighborhood Based Dispute Resolution Board
- 3.) City Planning Department
- 4.) City Council
- 5.) Mandatory, Independent Dispute Resolution Process

K. NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL PRELIMINARY COST PROJECTIONS

The cost considerations are an important public policy issue that will influence the debate on the merits of NCs. A major contention will center on whether NCs are simply another increase in the cost of government services. The Commission and the public require a semblance of comprehension in relation to what the anticipated direct costs of an NC system would be on the city budget. In an effort to address this issue, staff has developed a preliminary cost estimate for a citywide NC system.

The issues of NC related costs, in reality, will not be fully resolved through the Charter Reform process. However, both the Commission and the public need to develop an understand of the parameters involving staffing and office related expenses to gauge the potential impact on the city budget. Through this analysis, the Commission will develop the ability to establish a reasonable public response to a major factor overarching the Charter Reform process, the impact on the city budget of various proposals being debated.

The Neighborhood Council Cost Projections (see Appendix A) was developed on two levels. The first level was to determine a basic set of NC office configurations. Once this section was developed, preliminary cost estimates were developed for office expenses, equipment and staff. Three scenarios were developed:

- 1) Small Staff
- 2) Moderate Staff
- 3) Full Staff

While the merits of what actually constitutes an accurate staff size remains an unclear proposition, the objective of the cost projections was to develop a reasonable initial framework of NC office expenses. In reality, NC offices may be larger or smaller than these estimates. Thus the parameters of the issue need to be addressed with the assumption that a level of change is inherent in the future.

The second level of analysis was to project each staff configuration within a range between 20 to 80 NCs city wide (in increments of 10). The goal was to create an estimated total cost framework from which the Commission can develop an understanding of the financial impact of implementing an NC system. It is this section that will be critical to establishing an fiscal impact assessment of any NC proposal. The baseline percentage relationship is the current city budget of \$4 billion (FY 1997).

1. Neighborhood Council Staff Configurations

The cost projections are based on three office configurations, a low, medium and full sized office. The lowest staff size includes an office manager, one PC system and related office

costs. The estimated annual cost for this alternative is \$53,000. The medium staff configuration includes the addition of two part-time community organizers and an increase in general office costs. The estimated annual cost for this alternative is \$117,000. The final alternative is based on the addition of a research consultant, another PC, and an increase in office operating costs. The estimated annual cost for this alternative is \$142,000.

2. Overview of Fiscal Impacts on a Range of Neighborhood Council Scenarios

In relation to a comparative NC system cost projection, the range is between \$1,060,000 (20 small staff NCs) to \$11,360,000 (80 fully staffed NCs). The percentage relationship between these extremes is .026% to .28% of the current city budget. The main point is that the highest budget with the most NCs is less than .3% of the city budget. If the large staff configuration was adopted the direct cost to city government would be minuscule. If the staff size were to be increased by 100% this would only result in an expenditure of approximately .6% of the city budget, which is also minimal.

If the NC system incorporated a range of between 40 to 60 councils, the cost range at the high end is projected to be between \$5,680,000 to \$8,520,000. The corresponding percentage relationships are between .14% to .21% of the current city budget.

L. ALTERNATIVE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL ELECTION PROCEDURES

This section will analyze three alternatives in establishing NC election procedures. The purpose of developing a range of election frameworks is to assess a pragmatic and fair election system that would govern the NC process. Each alternative creates a different strategy to enhance locally based representation on NCs. The Commission should view these alternatives with the caveat that NCs may want to determine their own election system in the future. Irrespective of which scenario is supported, the goal remains similar, equal access and broad based local participation.

The defination of election procedures influences candidate qualification, the campaign process, interest group participation and the format of grassroots lobbying. While no universal NC election system was apparent in other cities, a number of cities allowed different formats within their respective NCs. This level of flexibility is an important discussion within the context of this issue. If the commission determines that each NC should have the right to select its own representational formula, this section would constitute a range of options for the future.

The three alternatives analyzed in this section are, 1) a traditional local political campaign, 2) a community caucus of local interest groups, and 3) designated representatives from predetermined local interest groups. Each alternative is distinct, with significant differences in relation to candidate qualification, campaign funding, access into the process, local lobbying strategies and election time frames.

1. Traditional General Election

The first alternative would provide for a general election to an NC based on a traditional political campaign structure. Candidates would have to either live in the district, or in the case of predetermined interest group categories indicate compliance to specific criteria. Candidates would be free to conduct a campaign in an open manner, with few restrictions. The Commission should consider establishing an election time frame, campaign reporting and ethics criteria, candidate qualification standards, possibly address campaign funding limits, and use of city departments and facilities to conduct the elections.

This alternative requires a significant level of neighborhood canvassing, phone banking and mailing leading to the election. Candidates would be expected to participate in debates, develop positions on current local issues, possibly engage in negative campaigning, and actively solicit endorsements from major organizations and associations. In addition, existing office holders would be expected to support specific candidates and provide direct financial assistance.

2. Community Caucus

This alternative is based on an early historical model of grassroots democracy in which

active area residents meet in a convention format to determine council representation. This model is often associated with townships in New England during the 1700 and 1800s. This model would require that a town meeting date be established within a set time frame. The criteria for candidate and voting qualification would have to be established prior to the caucus. Candidates would have to either live in the district, or in the case of predetermined interest group categories indicate compliance to specific criteria. A key procedural issue is the time frame of the election. Should the election be an all day activity, occur within a set time frame with only those in attendance voting or a flexible process that may last more than one day.

The Commission should consider establishing an election time frame, campaign reporting and ethics criteria, and candidate qualification standards. In addition, should there be specific interest group representation or should candidacy be limited to area residents. In addition, who constitutes a stakeholder qualified to vote should be determined if this format is adopted.

This alternative would result in an unspecified level of neighborhood canvassing, phone banking and mailing leading to the caucus. Candidates would be expected to participate in debates, develop positions on local issues, and solicit endorsements from major organizations and associations. Current office holders can be expected to support specific candidates and recruit supporters to attend the caucus. Candidates would be actively engaged in developing strong participant turnout within their support groups prior to the event.

3. Interest Group and Organizational Model

This scenario is based on utilizing existing local organizations, associations, coordinating councils and other institutions in develop NC representation. These entities would be expected to caucus on an individual basis, determine who should be designated as their representative(s) (and possibly vesting power in more than one member), and adhere to a general representational framework that applies to a diverse set of local entities.

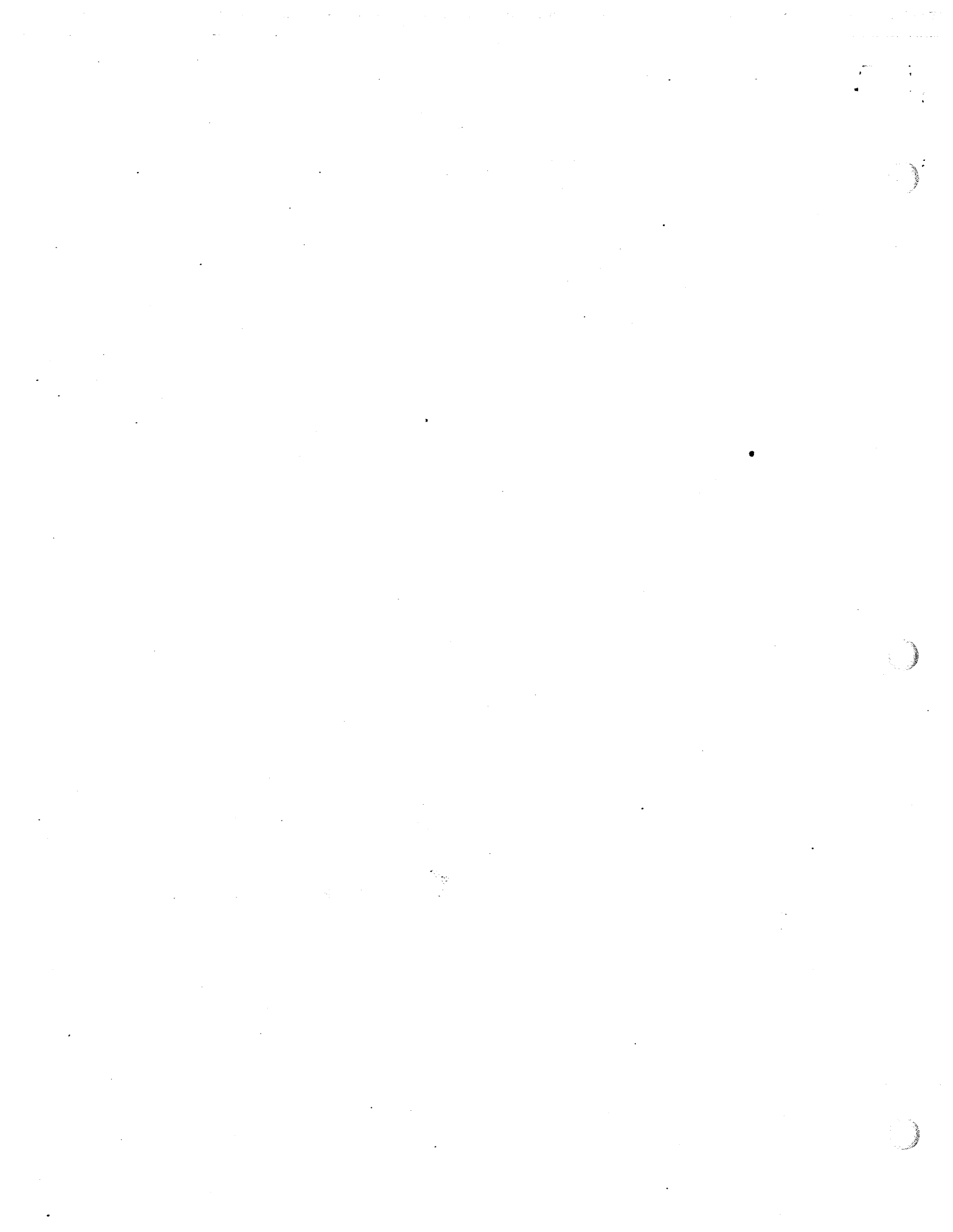
This is a difficult format for the Commission to develop a specific set of candidate and interest group qualifications since the model is predicated on the uniqueness and existing socio-political conditions of a respective district. Since no NC district will exhibit uniform characteristics in relation to organizational and interest group infrastructure, the Commission would need to consider a flexible level of representational criteria. However, the appropriate approach for this alternative is to allow NC district representatives the ability to establish a locally based candidate and interest group qualification system.

Interest groups and organizations would attempt to maximize their level of representation, lobby within their interest group constituency to increase representation, and compete both within interest group coalitions and against adversarial interest groups in relation to participation levels on a particular council. Once established, this model would be difficult to change unless existing power centers would be willing to concede some level of representational advantage. In addition, weak interest groups may not have the capability to effectively lobby for

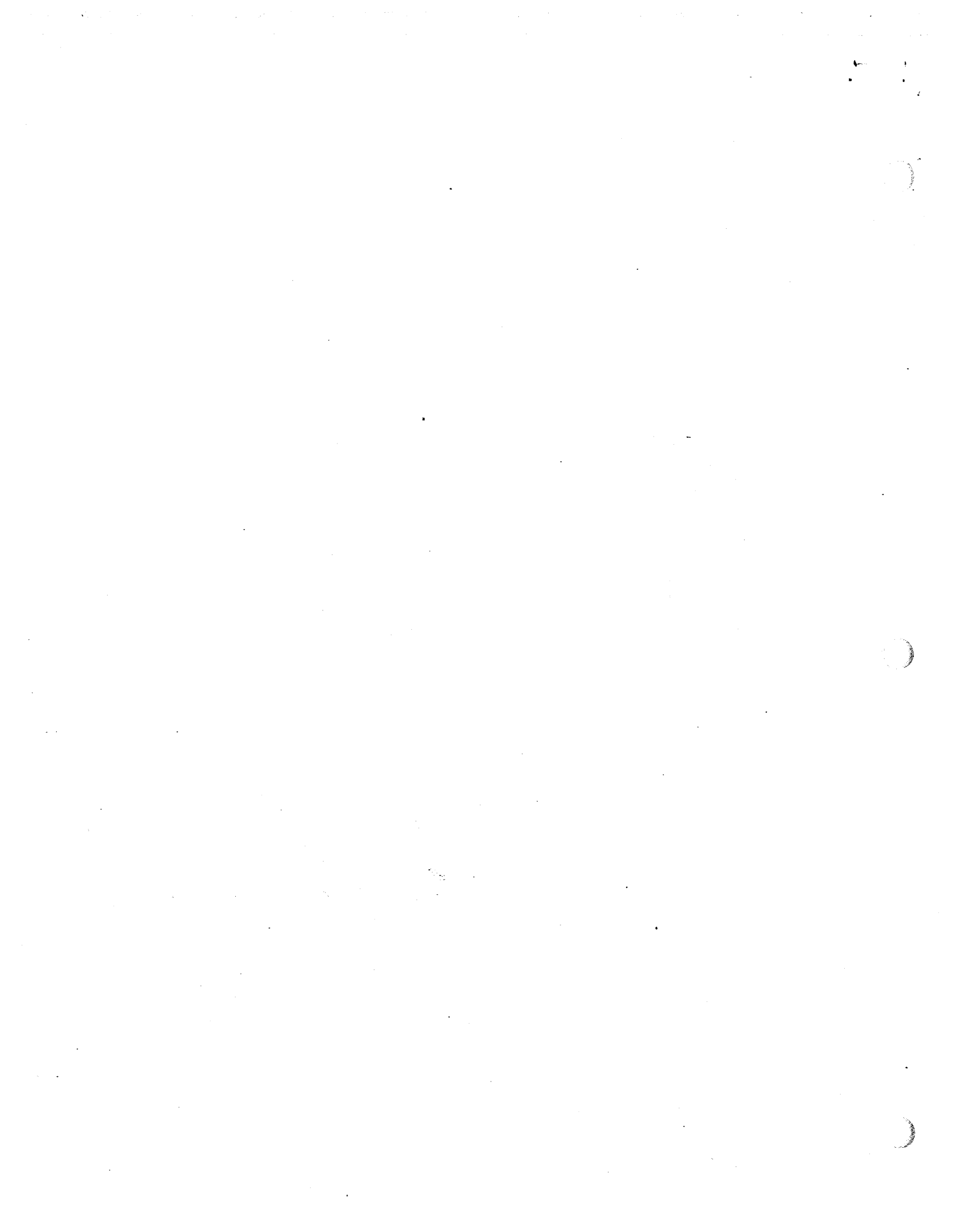
inclusion and a reasonable level of representation at the initial stage of the process, a factor which may preclude long term influence in the NC system.

4. CHARTER ALTERNATIVES

- a.) General Election
- b.) Community Caucus
- c.) Interest Group Designation
- d.) Flexible Approach to be Determined by Each Respective NC



APPENDIX A



NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL COST PROJECTIONS

NUMBER OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

(In increments of 10)

	20	30	40	50	60	70	80
SMALL STAFF: (\$53,000/office)	\$ 1,060,000	\$ 1,590,000	\$ 2,120,000	\$ 2,650,000	\$ 3,180,000	\$ 3,710,000	\$ 4,240,000
MEDIUM STAFF: (\$117,000/office)	\$ 2,340,000	\$ 3,510,000	\$ 4,680,000	\$ 5,850,000	\$ 7,020,000	\$ 8,190,000	\$ 9,360,000
FULL STAFF: (\$142,000/office)	\$ 2,840,000	\$ 4,260,000	\$ 5,680,000	\$ 7,100,000	\$ 8,520,000	\$ 9,940,000	\$ 11,360,000

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL COST MATRIX

LOW BUDGET OFFICE:

OFFICE DIRECTOR:
(annual salary) \$ 40,000.00

OFFICE COSTS for one year:
(I.E. materials, phones, copying. 300/month)

\$ 4,000.00

OFFICE RENTAL SPACE:
(500/month)

\$ 6,000.00

LOW END COMPUTER,
PRINTER, FAX MACH.:
(one time startup costs)

\$ 2,000.00

OFFICE EQUIPMENT:
(I.E. chairs, desks. one time startup costs)

\$ 1,000.00

TOTAL COSTS FOR ONE YEAR:

\$ 53,000.00

MEDIUM SIZED OFFICE:

OFFICE DIRECTOR:
(annual salary) \$ 40,000.00

2 FULL TIME CONSTITUENT SERVICES
(30,000 ea./year) \$ 60,000.00

OFFICE COSTS per year:
(I.E: materials, phones, copying. 400/month) \$ 5,000.00

OFFICE RENTAL SPACE:
(750/month) \$ 9,000.00

LOW END COMPUTER,
PRINTER, FAX:
(one time start-up costs) \$ 2,000.00

OFFICE EQUIPMENT:
(I.E. chairs, desks. one time startup costs) \$ 1,000.00

TOTAL COSTS FOR ONE YEAR: \$ 117,000.00

FULL SIZED OFFICE

OFFICE DIRECTOR:
(annual salary) \$ 40,000.00

2 FULL TIME CONSTITUENT SERVICES
(30,000 ea./year) \$ 60,000.00

RESEARCH CONSULTANT:
(annual salary) \$ 16,000.00

OFFICE COSTS per year:
(I.E: materials, phones, copying. 500/month) \$ 7,000.00

OFFICE RENTAL SPACE:
(1000/month) \$ 12,000.00

2 COMPUTER SYSTEMS,
PRINTERS, FAX:
(one time start-up costs) \$ 5,000.00

OFFICE EQUIPMENT:
(I.E. chairs, desks. one time startup costs) \$ 2,000.00

TOTAL COSTS FOR ONE YEAR: \$ 142,000.00