

**Written Testimony for Ohio Redistricting Commission Hearing
Zanesville, 8/25/2021, 9:30am-12:30pm**

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you. My name is Luanne Hendricks, and I live in House District 19, Senate District 3, in the City of Westerville. I would like to draw your attention to the issue of school districts being divided by Ohio House and Senate district lines.

I belong to a group called Sustainable Westerville that considers its community to be the Westerville City School District, also becoming known as the Greater Westerville Area. The School District is currently split by Senate Districts 3, 15, and 19, and House Districts 19, 22, 25, and 68.

Given that district drawing rules prioritize keeping counties whole, it is understandable that the parts of the School District in Franklin County are in different districts than those in Delaware County. However, there is no clear reason why the portion of the School District in Franklin County needs to be split into three different Senate Districts, and three different House Districts. The vast majority of the school district is in House District 19, and Senate District 3. However, several neighborhoods in the south portion of the school district are in House Districts 22 and 25, and Senate Districts 15 and 19.

Why is this important? Just for simplicity, it would make more sense for all neighborhoods in the Franklin County part of the school district to be included in the same House and Senate District. It would make it easier for House and Senate representatives to concentrate energy on the school district related needs of their constituents if they represented fewer school districts. It would make it easier for teachers to help their students understand who their representatives are.

More importantly, in Westerville there is a need to foster a sense of commonality and inclusion in the student body. Having listened to discussions among community groups, which include Westerville for Racial Equity, Inclusion and Social Engagement, and Sustainable Westerville, I have learned that there are students and residents that feel excluded from membership in the community. This is especially true of those living in the southern parts of the district that are less affluent, more diverse, and more split up into different legislative districts. Having different representatives from everyone else in your school might make it difficult to participate equally in civics class discussions, and be one more reason to feel different, excluded, and unimportant.

Sustainable Westerville created a community map of the Westerville School District. A teacher who helped create this map was later sought out by a school colleague who lives in the south part of the district, and saw this map on our Facebook page. She thanked the teacher for including her neighborhood, explaining that she and her family frequently feel excluded from the community. Seeing her neighborhood included in our map made her feel valued, and part of our community.

School districts are one of the most important parts of the social fabric of a community. I ask you to consider keeping school districts whole when drawing Ohio House and Senate District lines.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my request.

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August 20, 2021

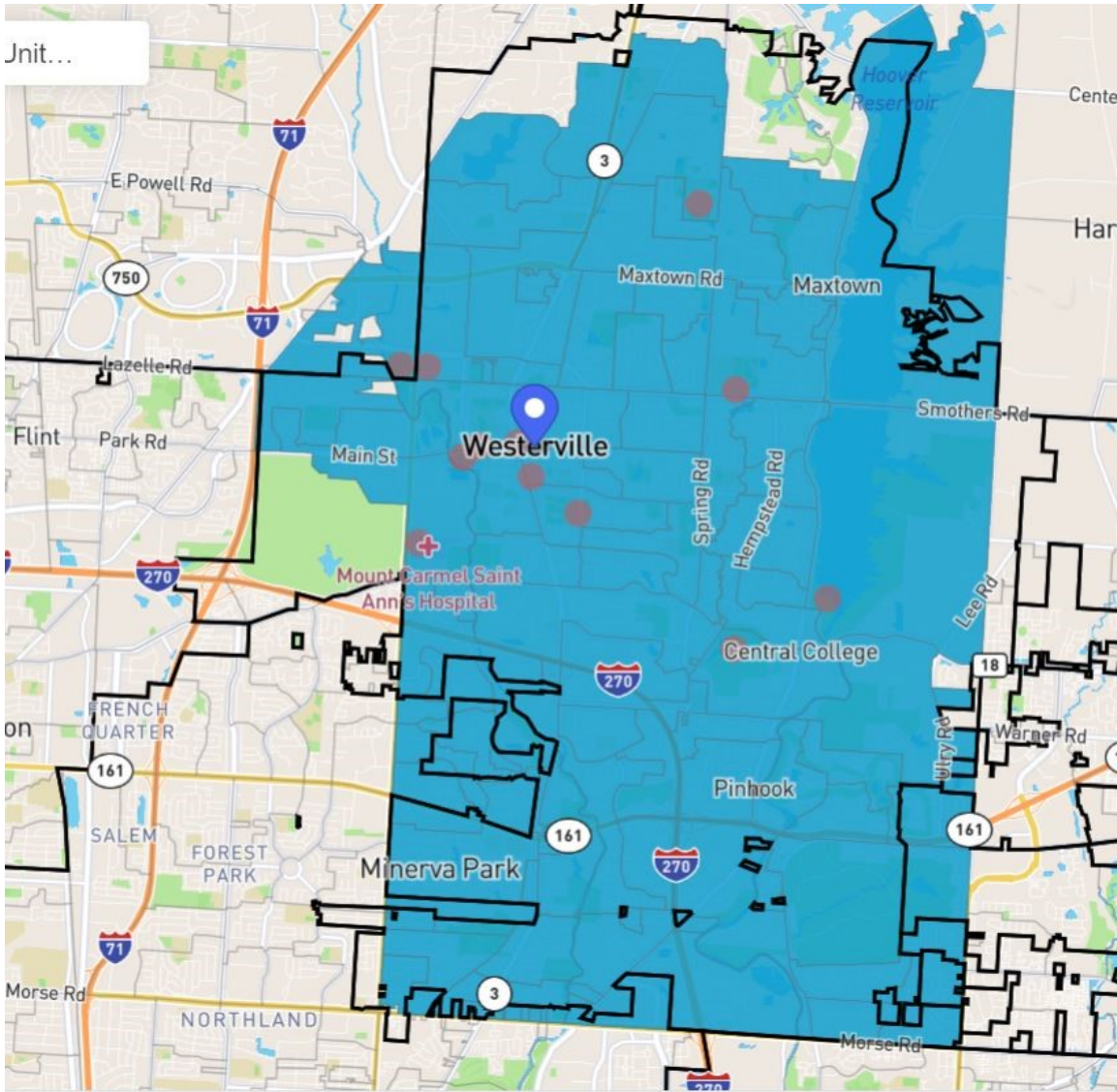
**Map Supplement to Written Testimony for
Ohio Redistricting Commission Hearing
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**On behalf of Sustainable Westerville
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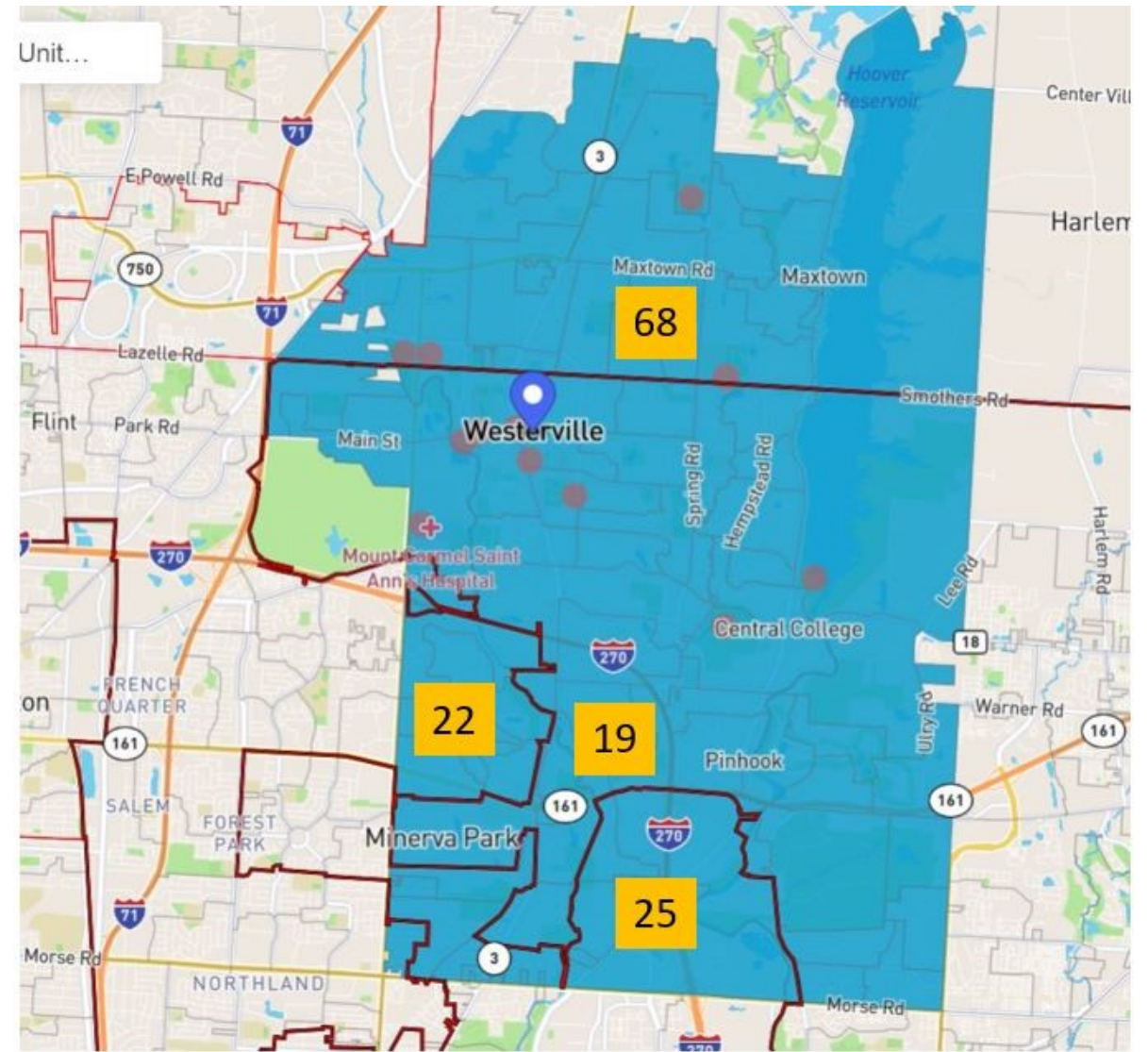
August 20, 2021

School District Lines



Sustainable Westerville's Community Map in blue covers the approximate Westerville School District lines. (Drawn in Districtr using precincts which don't conform to school district lines.)

Ohio House and Senate District Lines



Ohio House District numbers shown in Orange Boxes

Map URL: <https://districtr.org/COI/38038>

Ohio House and Senate Districts covering the Westerville City School District Community of Interest

House District	Senate District	County
19 - Lightbody	3 - Maharath	Franklin
22 - Leland	19 - Brenner	Franklin
25 - Jarrells	15 - Craig	Franklin
68 - Carfagna	19 - Brenner	Delaware

The Sustainable Westerville community group drew a community of interest map using Districtr software. Sustainable Westerville considers their community to be the Westerville City School District.

Our community of interest is currently divided by the 4 Ohio House and 3 Senate districts shown above.

Communities of Interest - Description from District of our Community Map

● Westerville City School District

This map was created by eight members of Sustainable Westerville, and encompasses the Greater Westerville Area which is approximately the Westerville City School District. This is the area that Sustainable Westerville considers their community.

The community shares many things including the Westerville Library. What brings people together is the schools. But many students in the southern portion do not identify with the Uptown and Uptown events such as 4th Friday. There is considerable diversity in SES (socioeconomic status). Higher income in northern areas. Many churches and places of worship.

Policy Concerns: Affordable housing (truly affordable). Representation of all constituents in this area. Equity. Sustainability. Diversity. Inclusion. Access to resources and facilities, programming. Not a lot of diversity in Uptown. Officials need to listen to students. Policing. Physical barriers to green space such as highways. Bike trails under highways don't feel safe and get flooded. Access to grocery stores below Rt. 270 in southwest corner. Food insecurity. Public transportation issues - maintaining bike paths.

What we love about our community - diversity is improving. Can see the past - still have a few old barns (Everal Barn). Parks are dotted throughout - Inniswood, City Parks, Hoover. Best of small town.

Outdoor recreation, bike trails. School district. Easy access to health care and necessary services. Restaurants. (But a question is: does everyone in our community feel these things are accessible to them.)

Re: Council Manager system:

On January 1, 1916, Westerville became the first village in Ohio to adopt a Council Manager form of government. following a July 31, 1915 poll in which Westerville voters decisively voted by a nearly two to one margin in favor of such.

Re: City Charter: (from the City's web page)

In 1964, Westerville Residents adopted a Home Rule Charter, which gives the municipal government greater local control and flexibility than the statutory form. Ohio statute governs only on matters which Westerville's Charter does not address.

Sustainable Westerville is a group of local citizens who are interested in working together on initiatives that improve the spaces in which we live, work, learn, and play. We advocate for the three legs of sustainability: social, economic, and environmental. Find us at sustainablewesterville.org and @sustainablewesterville on Instagram and Facebook. This map shows the approximate area of Westerville City School District.

Important Places

Uptown

Captures essence of what is unique about Westerville. Still has historical buildings. Where all municipal government buildings are located. History is evident - Temperance Movement, Hanby House, Underground Railroad. Place to bring family who have never been to Westerville. Otterbein Campus can be considered part of the Uptown

Alum Creek Park North

"Choo Choo Park" Popular park. Ampitheatre. Basketball courts

Hoover Dam - Reservoir Park

Draws people from all over including people from Columbus. Columbus water supply from the reservoir.

Inniswood Metro Gardens

Popular botanical garden and nature preserve.

Westerville Central HS

Theatre productions. Sporting events made available. Parking cones out for practicing parallel parking. Westerville Library uses Central for big author events.

Westerville North High School

Community resource similar to Westerville Central HS

Westerville South HS

Description similar to Westerville Central HS

Westerville Public Library

Community center and resource. Museum. Serves the Westerville CSD.

Westerville Community Center

Recreation, classes, pool, meeting areas.

Hanby House

The Hanby House, a national historic site, is the former home of composer, educator and pastor Benjamin R. Hanby. He is best known as the composer of "Darling Nelly Gray" and "Up on the Housetop". Benjamin Hanby and his father Bishop William Hanby were both abolitionists active in the Underground Railroad. The Hanby House, relocated from its original location at the corner of Grove and Main Streets is perhaps the best physical reminder of Westerville's historical connection to the Underground Railroad.

Westerville Sports Complex

The sports fields, basketball courts and walking trails at the Westerville Sports Complex are exceedingly popular and are used extensively by a very large and diverse collection of residents from all areas of the Westerville School District and beyond

Mt. Carmel St. Ann's Hospital

8/21/2021

District

Following intense efforts by Westerville City officials, St. Ann's hospital relocated to Westerville in 1984, becoming Westerville's first and only full fledged hospital. It has been serving the Westerville community ever since.
