



December 27, 2022

*Sent via email*

Amy Craig, Municipal Clerk  
City Hall  
10 N. Roosevelt St.  
P.O. Box 500  
York, SC 29745  
[acraig@yorksc.gov](mailto:acraig@yorksc.gov)

**Re: York City Council Redistricting**

Dear Ms. Craig,

As you know well, the York City Council has announced a work session on January 17, 2023 to review new, draft district maps for the York City Council recommended by the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (“RFA”). We, the Western York Branch and the South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP, write to you today to again provide the NAACP’s maps for consideration prior to that meeting (the maps have likewise been provided to RFA) and to encourage the City Council to ensure that whichever maps are ultimately enacted are not only compliant with the U.S. Constitution, but also take proper care to respect the diverse communities of interest that exist in York. Additionally, as the redistricting process begins in earnest, we ask that the Council commit to drawing its maps openly in the public eye with opportunity for public discussion and comment.

In any districting change, cities, such as York, have an affirmative obligation, under the U.S. Constitution and the Voting Rights Act to ensure that voters of color are not denied an equal opportunity “to participate in the political process and elect candidates of their choice . . . .”<sup>1</sup> Mapmakers must take special care not to dilute the voting strength of communities of color when fashioning electoral districts or systems and, under certain conditions, Section 2 of the VRA may mandate the creation of

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<sup>1</sup> *Thornburg v. Gingles*, 478 U.S. 30, 34 (1986).

effective single-member minority-opportunity districts where Black voters make up a majority.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, redistricting is fundamentally a process of ensuring that York’s democracy speaks for York’s residents; providing even those who are the most marginalized in our city an opportunity to have their democratic voice heard. City Council must draw districts that, rather than splitting up neighborhoods, church groups and, even families, keep communities of interest whole. In looking at the proposed RFA maps, we are particularly concerned about the ways the map splits up York’s Black communities. For instance, the proposed RFA map divides the Black community surrounding the historically Black Clinton Chapel AME Zion church, along California Street, between multiple districts. Voters who live no more than a couple of hundred yards apart are separated from their neighbors and forced to vote in different districts. Clinton Chapel AME Zion serves as not only a religious center for many Black residents of York, but as a community hub for the neighborhood. The church even served as a primary testing facility for nearby residents during the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet congregants, who know each other well and frequently share space, are spread thin several districts. This cracking of the Black community near California Street not only limits the ability of Black residents to elect candidates who represent their interest, but also may cause voters confusion as to which district they are in and ultimately hinder electoral participation. As the Council is well aware, the maps which are ultimately selected will structure York’s elections for roughly the next decade. It is necessary, as a result, to ensure that all communities are taken into account in this process and provided with adequate and fair representation.

Providing opportunities for meaningful, extensive and accessible public engagement is key to respecting York’s various communities and developing maps that take them into account. We are hopeful that the January 17, 2023 work session is the start of the Council’s process and we encourage the Council to lay out a more extensive process for public hearings and comments to follow that meeting and prior to any vote on maps. Doing so will enable interested members of the public to engage fully with the process and not only submit their own proposals, as we do here, but also connect with the Council directly and offer their crucial insight into how maps will affect themselves and their neighbors. Additionally, we encourage the Council to

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<sup>2</sup> *Gingles* sets out three “preconditions” for where there is likely to be a violation of Section 2. Voters of color must first “demonstrate that [they are] sufficiently large and geographically compact to constitute a majority in a single-member district.” *Id.* at 50. Second, voters of color must be a “politically cohesive” community which, third, “usually [has their] . . . preferred candidate” defeated because “the white majority votes sufficiently as a bloc . . . .” *Id.* at 51. Preconditions two and three are typically referred to as racial bloc or racially polarized voting.

take necessary steps to encourage public participation such as hosting meetings after work hours, providing opportunities for virtual engagement and providing sufficient lead time that residents can adjust their schedules as necessary to participate. By doing so the City Council can develop new maps that truly reflect the whole of York and its broad voter base.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our maps and thoughts. We are prepared to work with the City Council, consistent with public participation rule, in developing an inclusive redistricting plan that is not only legally compliant, but takes proper account of the various communities of interest present in York. Please free to contact Brenda Murphy at [info@scnaacp.org](mailto:info@scnaacp.org) with any questions and we look forward to an ongoing conversation as the redistricting process moves forward.

Sincerely,



Brenda Murphy  
President  
South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP  
[info@scnaacp.org](mailto:info@scnaacp.org)

*/s/ Meredith McPhail*

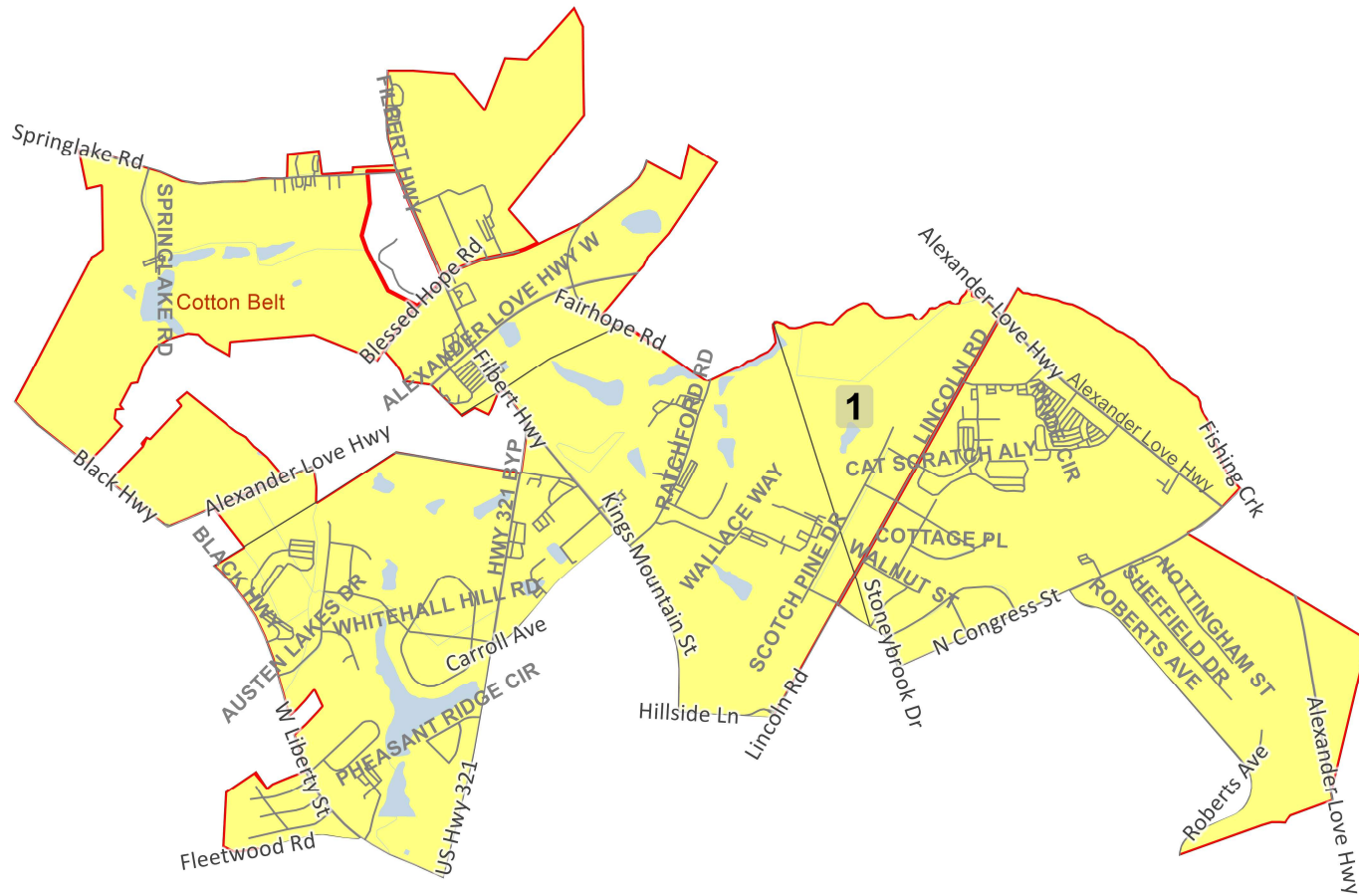
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*/s/ R. Gary Spencer*

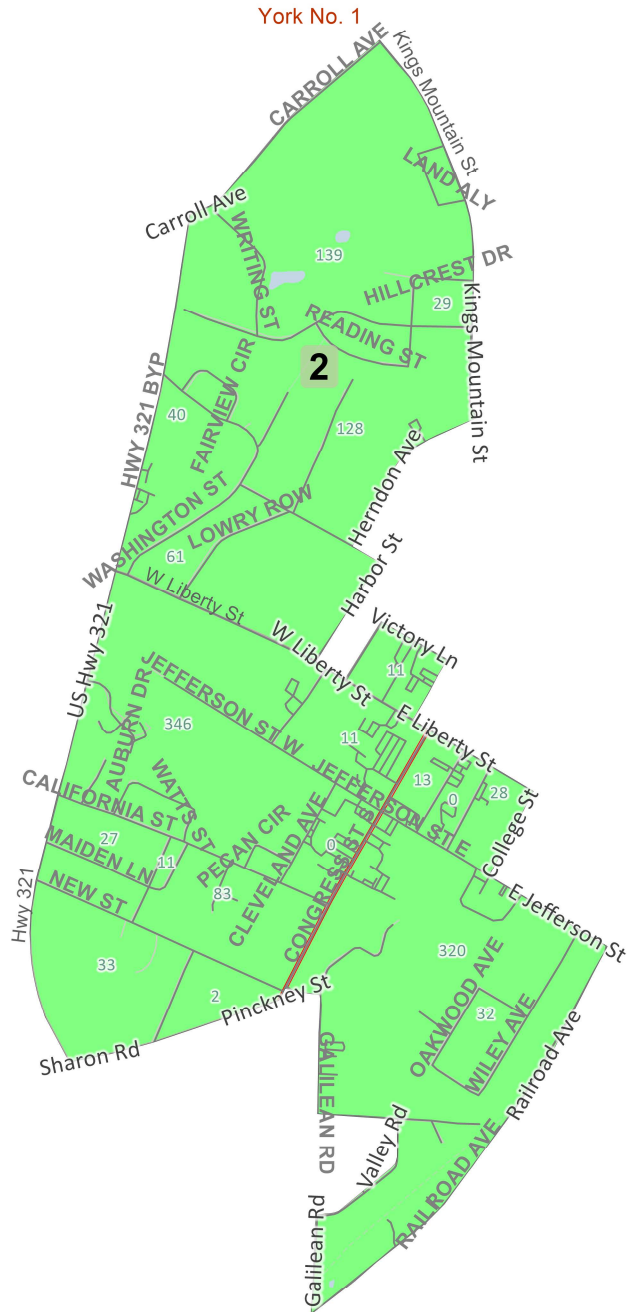
R. Gary Spencer,  
Senior Counsel  
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund,  
Inc. 700 14th Street N.W. Ste. 600  
Washington, D.C. 20005

# District: 1



Field	Value
District	1
Population	1457.000
Deviation	5
% Deviation	0.34%
NH_AP_BlK	338.000
% NH_AP_BlK	23.2%
NH_Wht	932.000
% NH_Wht	63.97%
Hispanic Origin	123.000
% Hispanic Origin	8.44%
18+_Pop	1069.000
NH18+_AP_BlK	221.000
% NH18+_AP_BlK	20.67%
NH18+_Wht	723.000
% NH18+_Wht	67.63%
H18+_Pop	71.000
% H18+_Pop	6.64%

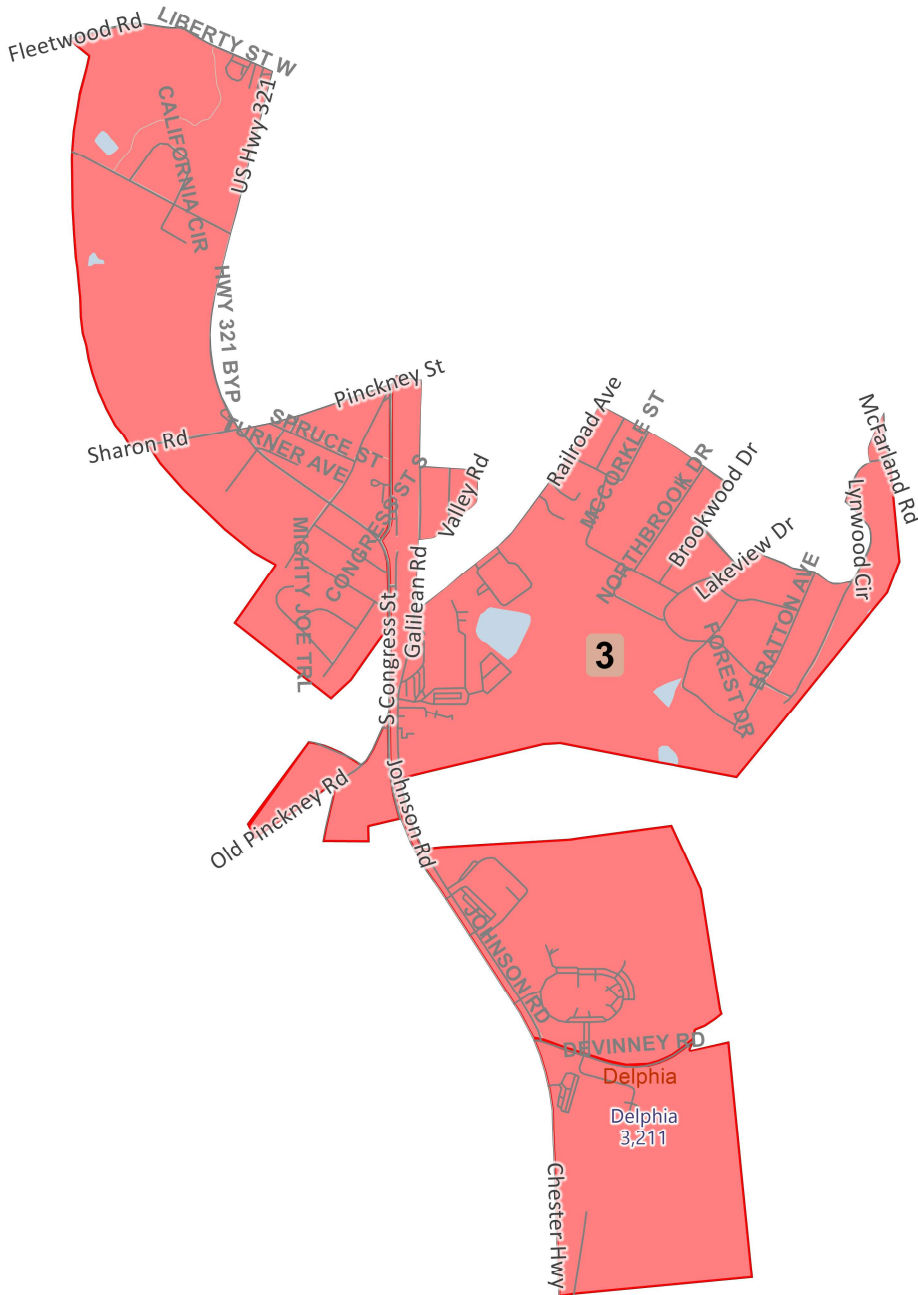
# District: 2



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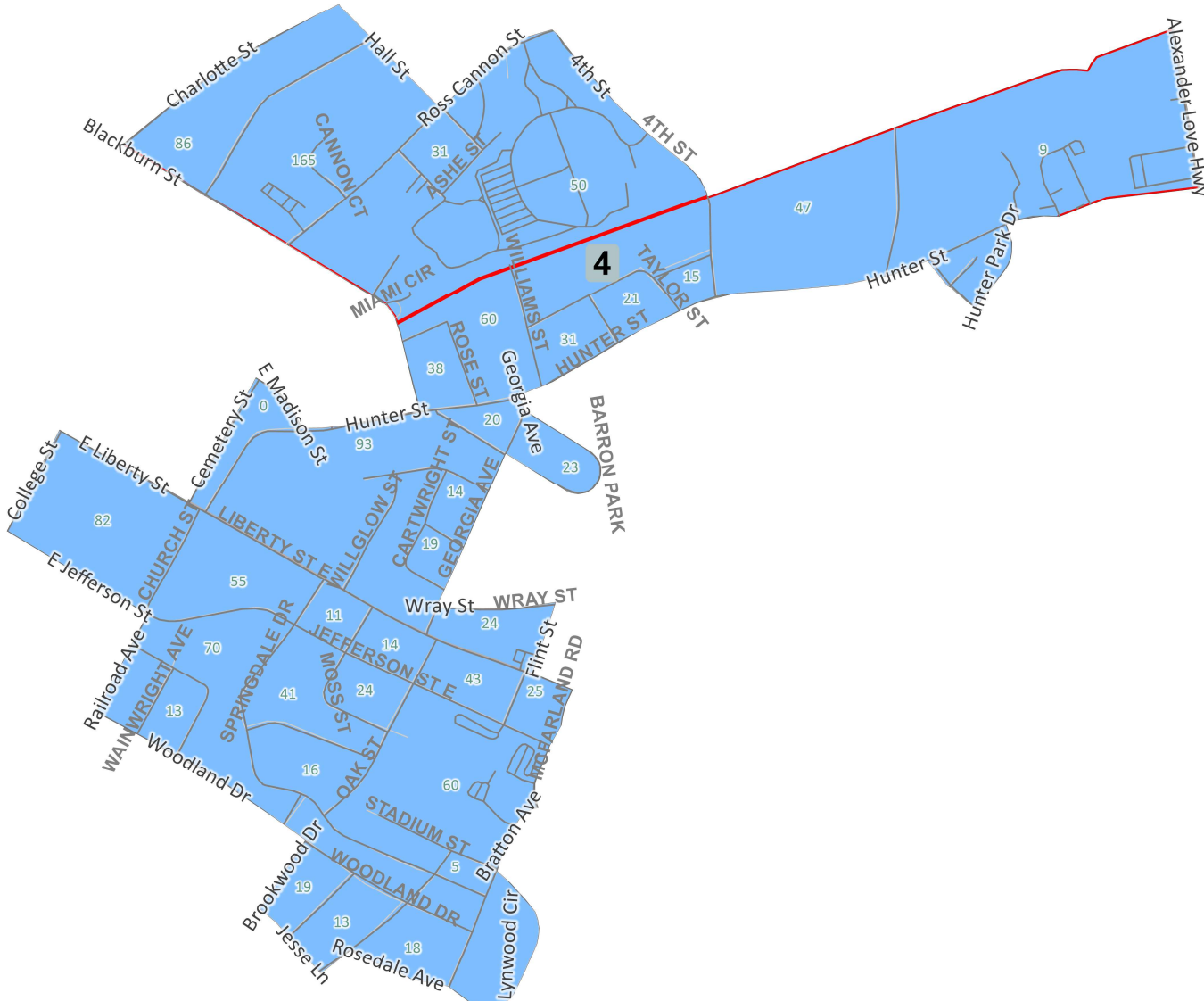
Field	Value
District	2
Population	1426.000
Deviation	-26
% Deviation	-1.79%
NH_AP_BlK	839.000
% NH_AP_BlK	58.84%
NH_WhT	500.000
% NH_WhT	35.06%
Hispanic Origin	55.000
% Hispanic Origin	3.86%
18+_Pop	1084.000
NH18+_AP_BlK	597.000
% NH18+_AP_BlK	55.07%
NH18+_WhT	429.000
% NH18+_WhT	39.58%
H18+_Pop	39.000
% H18+_Pop	3.6%

# District: 3



Field	Value
District	3
Population	1432.000
Deviation	-20
% Deviation	-1.38%
NH_AP_BlK	857.000
% NH_AP_BlK	59.85%
NH_Wht	471.000
% NH_Wht	32.89%
Hispanic Origin	61.000
% Hispanic Origin	4.26%
18+_Pop	1020.000
NH18+_AP_BlK	603.000
% NH18+_AP_BlK	59.12%
NH18+_Wht	348.000
% NH18+_Wht	34.12%
H18+_Pop	40.000
% H18+_Pop	3.92%

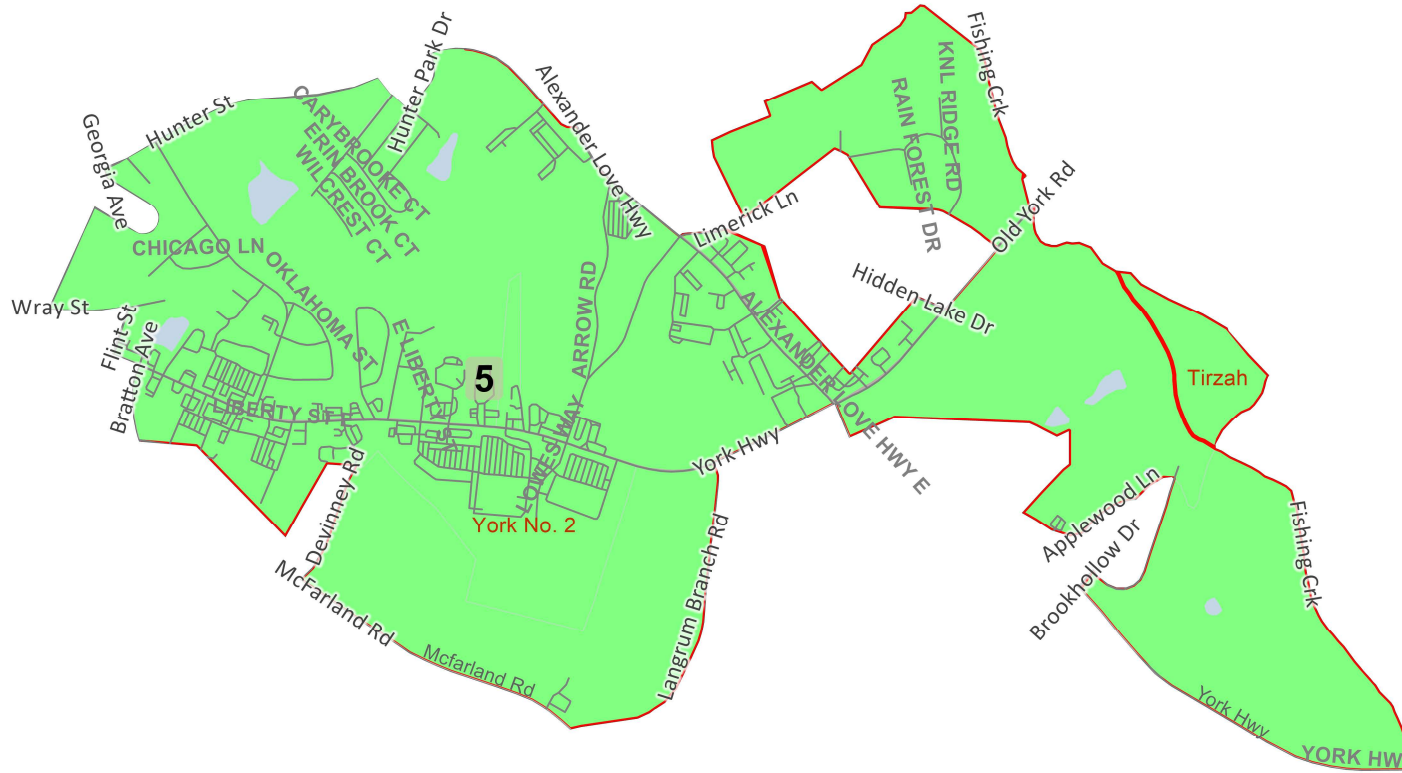
# District: 4



Field	Value
District	4
Population	1433.000
Deviation	-19
% Deviation	-1.31%
NH_AP_BlK	416.000
% NH_AP_BlK	29.03%
NH_Wht	767.000
% NH_Wht	53.52%
Hispanic Origin	190.000
% Hispanic Origin	13.26%
18+_Pop	1039.000
NH18+_AP_BlK	293.000
% NH18+_AP_BlK	28.2%
NH18+_Wht	612.000
% NH18+_Wht	58.9%
H18+_Pop	97.000
% H18+_Pop	9.34%



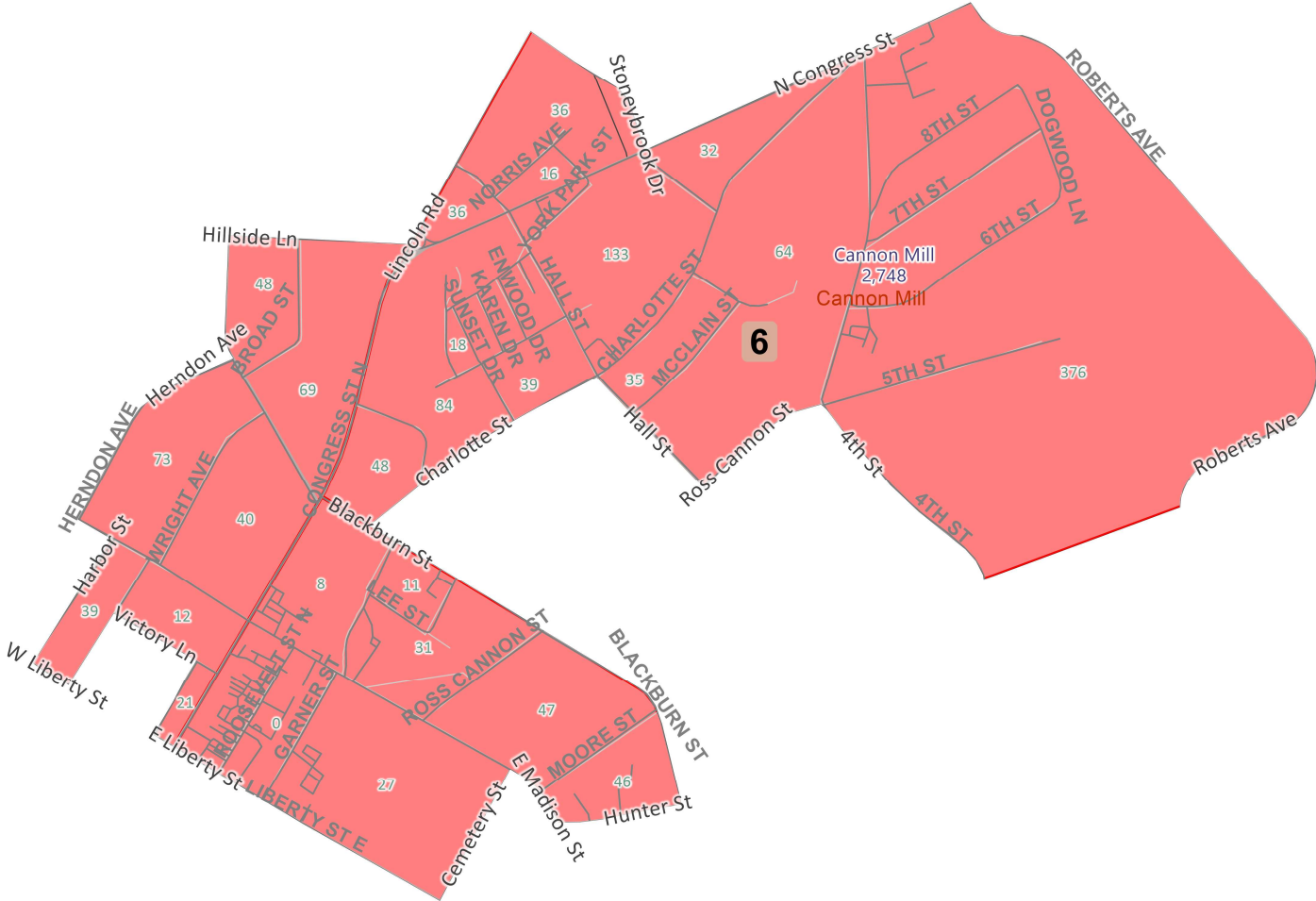
# District: 5



Field	Value
District	5
Population	1477.000
Deviation	25
% Deviation	1.72%
NH_AP_BlK	499.000
% NH_AP_BlK	33.78%
NH_Wht	869.000
% NH_Wht	58.84%
Hispanic Origin	81.000
% Hispanic Origin	5.48%
18+_Pop	1036.000
NH18+_AP_BlK	327.000
% NH18+_AP_BlK	31.56%
NH18+_Wht	647.000
% NH18+_Wht	62.45%
H18+_Pop	41.000
% H18+_Pop	3.96%



# District: 6



Field	Value
District	6
Population	1484.000
Deviation	32
% Deviation	2.2%
NH_AP_BlK	314.000
% NH_AP_BlK	21.16%
NH_Wht	873.000
% NH_Wht	58.83%
Hispanic Origin	224.000
% Hispanic Origin	15.09%
18+_Pop	1105.000
NH18+_AP_BlK	209.000
% NH18+_AP_BlK	18.91%
NH18+_Wht	712.000
% NH18+_Wht	64.43%
H18+_Pop	131.000
% H18+_Pop	11.86%