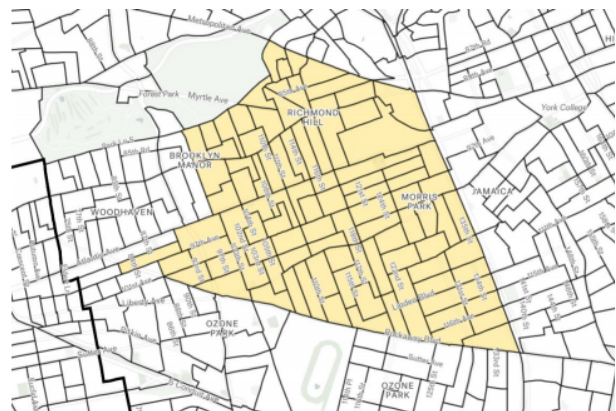
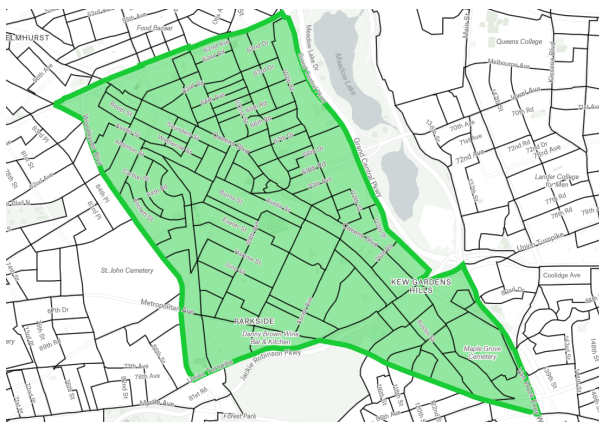


Coalition Calls for Assembly Districts that Make It Easier for Voters to Choose Their Reps

The Independent Redistricting Commission's Proposed Maps Fail to Keep Communities of Interests Together

The Central Queens Redistricting Coalition (CQRC) is a nonpartisan neighborhood group composed of local residents and civic leaders who reflect the community's diversity and who believe the people should drive the redistricting process to win fair representation. The CQRC reviewed the proposed assembly maps released by the New York Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) and found that both sets of maps fall short of our ideals of fairness, nonpartisanship, and community focus, and fail to keep our communities of interest whole. Instead, they split our neighborhoods, diluting our ability to advocate for resources and elect the representatives we want.

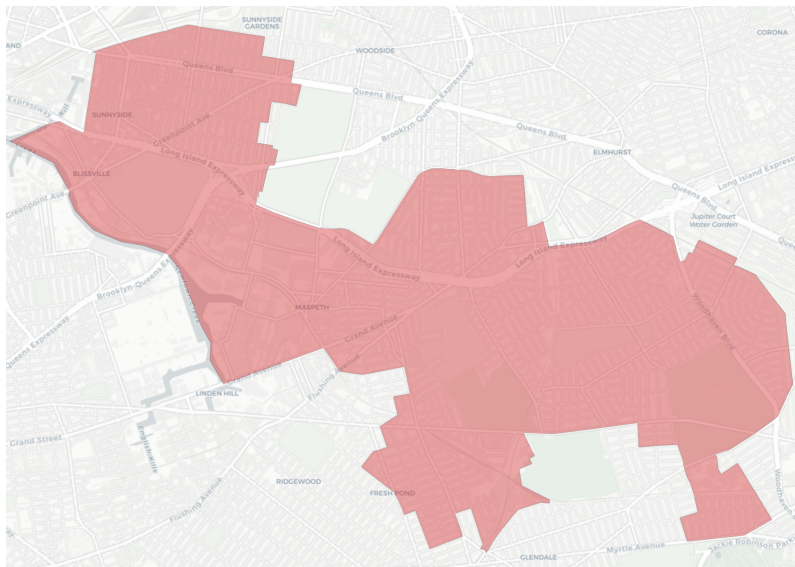
We submitted maps for two compact districts bounded by parks, highways or major thoroughfares. Each of them united three or four diverse communities whose residents shop and worship together, use the same transit lines, and are in only one or two school districts and community districts. One map included all of Forest Hills and Rego Park and most of Kew Gardens. The second included all of Richmond Hill, South Richmond Hill, Morris Park, and the part of Kew Gardens south of Metropolitan Avenue. We noted that the southern part of Kew Gardens and the part of Richmond Hill above Jamaica Avenue are one community that has long been chopped up in arbitrary ways that reduce the representation and services its residents need. We believe it should be kept together, though we recognized that it could fall into either of the districts we drew.



Forest Hills, Rego Park and Kew Gardens

In contrast, the “Names” assembly map that Republican members of the IRC proposed for Forest Hills, Rego Park and Kew Gardens, cuts out two areas of Rego Park, while adding to it a chunk of Woodhaven on the other side of Forest Park, where residents of Forest Hills, Rego Park and Kew Gardens seldom go in the course of daily life. (Similarly, Woodhaven residents seldom have reason to cross Forest Park in the opposite direction.)

The “Names” assembly map assigns the Rego Park Crescents to a sprawling district that includes parts of Middle Village, Glendale, Maspeth, and Sunnyside. We call this the “Elephant District,” based on its shape, and because it appears to be aimed at building Republican power.

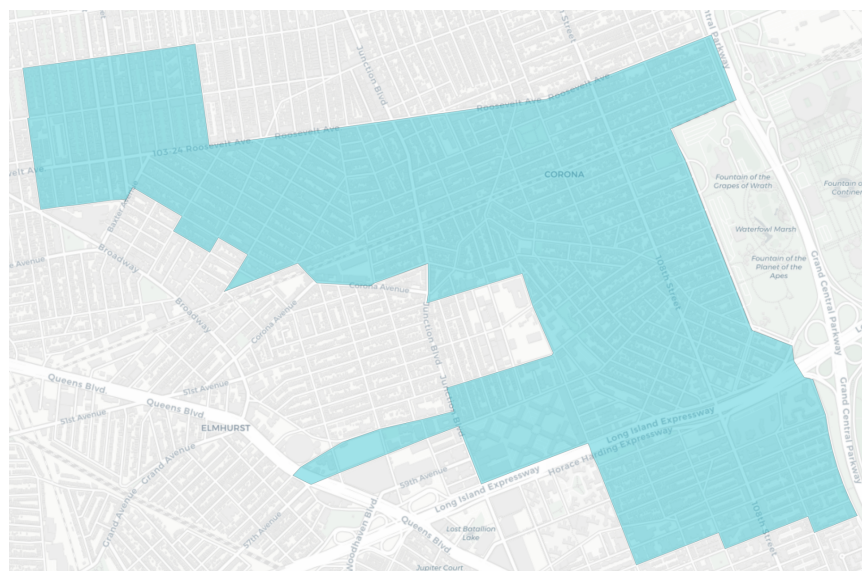


^The center hump on the “elephant” is the crescents neighborhood in Rego Park.

That district encompasses three school districts (28, 24, and 30) and three community boards (2, 5, and 6). Any elected official representing this proposed district would need to attend or send representatives to at least six regularly scheduled civic meetings a month.

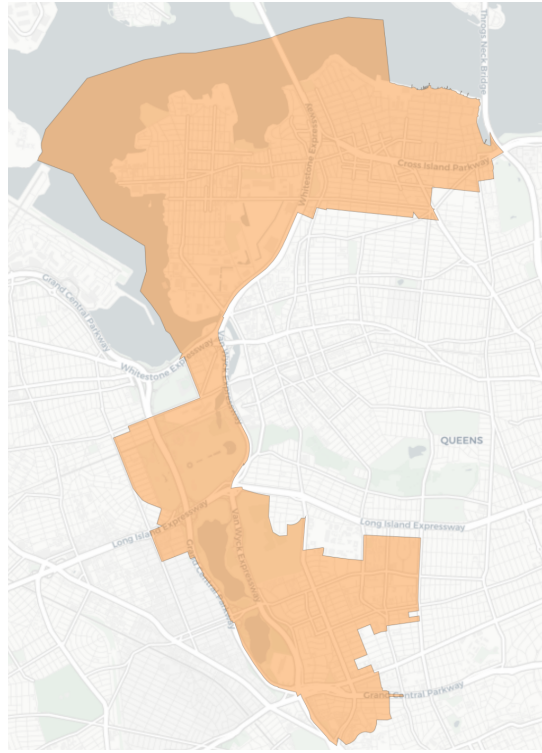
This “Names” assembly map also cuts off a piece of Rego Park north of 64 Avenue and east of 99 Street to connect it to Corona, where few Rego Park residents shop, worship or send their children to school. This Corona-centered district spans three school districts (24, 28 and 30) and three community boards (3, 4 and 6). It also divides the area between Metropolitan Avenue and Jamaica Avenue, which we had sought to keep

together. An elected official representing this proposed district would also need to attend or send representatives to at least six civic meetings a month.



^The bottom right portion that is south of the Long Island Expressway is Rego Park & Forest Hills.

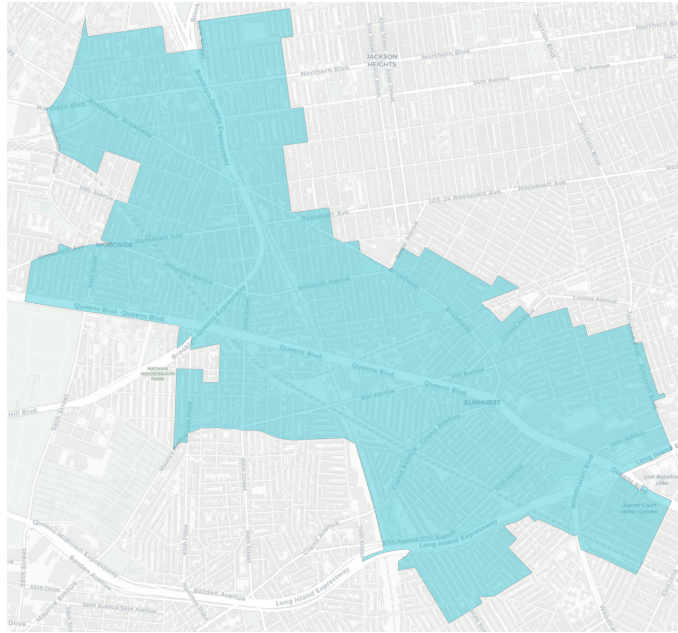
The “Letters” assembly map (AB) that the Democratic members of the IRC proposed for Rego Park, Forest Hills and Kew Gardens maintains a larger part of the current assembly district and mostly keeps these three communities together. However, it (AA) cuts out part of Forest Hills east of 108 Street and north of 62 Drive, assigning it to a district that encompasses part of Kew Garden Hills, downtown Flushing, College Point, Whitestone and Malba, to create a district shaped like a child kicking a can. As drawn, that district would probably take representation away from Flushing’s large Asian-American community.



^The corner that is south of the LIE & West of the GCP is Forest Hills. (Just a handful of blocks).

It also makes little sense in practical terms: While Forest Hills and Flushing have numerous public transit options, College Point, Whitestone and Malba have few. This district would encompass two school districts (25 and 28) and three community boards (6, 7 and 8). An elected official representing this district would need to attend or send representatives to at least five monthly civic meetings.

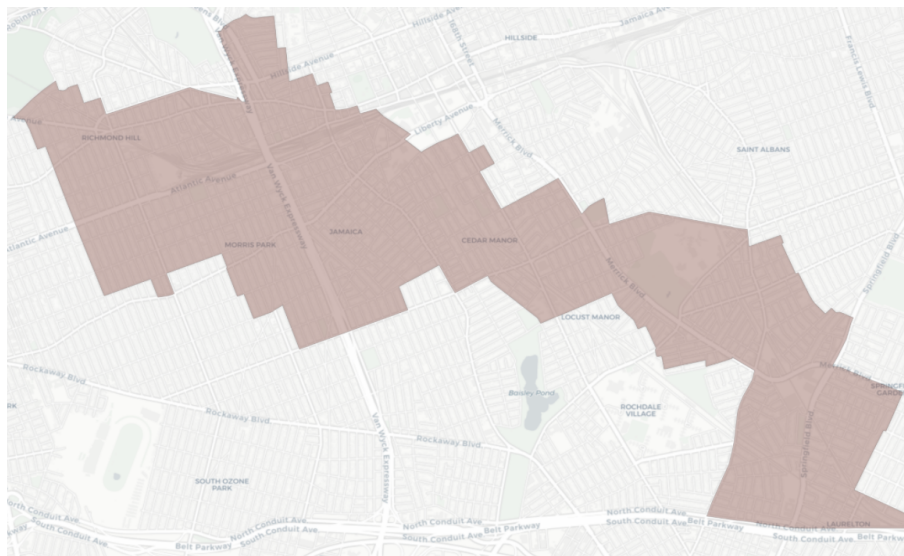
The “Letters: assembly map (A1) also cuts out part of Rego Park west of 62 Drive and connects it to Elmhurst and Corona, where few of its residents shop, worship or send their children to school. This district encompasses two school districts (24 and 27) and three community boards (3, 4, and 6). An assembly member seeking to serve this district well would need to attend or send representatives to at least five civic meetings a month.



^The small portion of map nestled between Queens & Woodhaven Blvd is Rego Park.

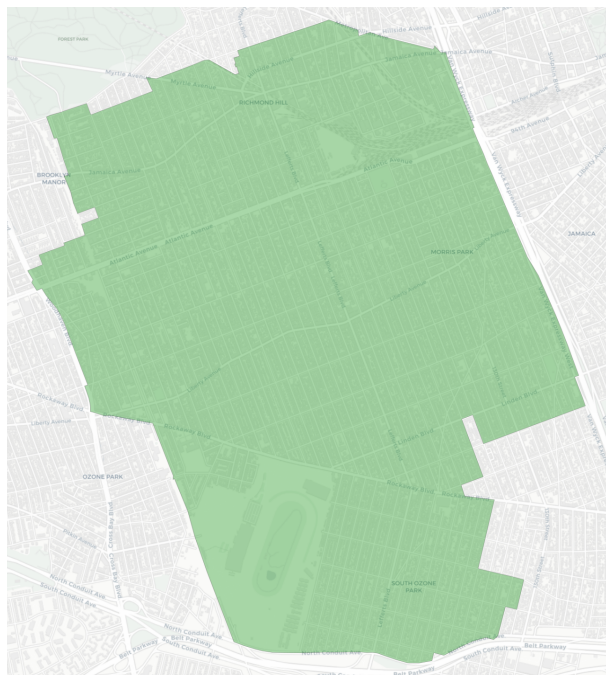
Richmond Hill and South Richmond Hill

The proposed “Names” map for Richmond Hill continues the historical pattern of slicing up Richmond Hill and South Richmond Hill, adjacent communities with a similar ethnic mix (largely Guyanese and Latin American) and shared shopping, schools and houses of worship. The eastern parts of Richmond Hill and South Richmond Hill are assigned to a sprawling district that extends through Morris Park, Jamaica, St. Albans, and Springfield Gardens to Laurelton. This proposed district will encompass two school districts (27 and 28) and two community boards (9 and 10). As this district is drawn, the representative here would need to attend at least four civic meetings weekly.



The western parts of Richmond Hill and most of South Richmond Hill are assigned to another district that includes parts of Ozone Park and South Ozone Park and extends across the Van Wyck into South Jamaica and Rochdale. This district, which looks like a person lying down, would include two school districts (27 and 28) and three community boards (5, 9, 10). An attentive representative would need to attend or send representatives to at least monthly civic meetings.

The proposed “Letters” (AL) assembly map keeps Richmond Hill intact and is closer to the map CQRC submitted, although its northern border cuts the triangle area between Jamaica and Metropolitan Avenues at Hillside Avenue, and it extends below Rockaway Boulevard to include a larger part of South Ozone Park. This map encompasses one school district (27) and two community boards (9 and 10). The representative of this district would need to attend at least three monthly civic meetings.



We Call on the IRC to:

1. Fulfill its mission by producing one set of fair, non-partisan **[nonpartisan?]** maps,
2. Release maps that reflect communities of interest as described during our public testimony.
3. Increase transparency by providing detailed explanations of the criteria used to draw its districts.
4. Provide adequate language accessibility to assure every citizen understands this process.