

A Position Statement  
Single Member Districts

Ed Acklin  
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I have expressed my view that Plano should consider some Single Member Districts as our voting method. I am aware that this has caused some concern among voters that are considering my candidacy as their representative on the Plano City Council. I have never been asked to explain my position widely until this afternoon, so I wish to do so now:

First, my definition of Single Member Districts is that as a candidate for Place 4 in Plano, I must live within the boundaries of Place 4. Further, only those living within those same boundaries would be eligible to vote for me.

There are 3 other Districts in the current system of voting that are classified as District Places. They are Places 1, 2 and 3. Places 5, 6 (Mayor), 7, and 8, are designated "At Large" Seats. That is the current election system.

My concern, and the reason I am considering suggesting the change, is that under the current system, it is too easy for an Established Group of Citizens to band together and unduly influence the outcome of all 8 City Council Place elections. With the average total voter turnout of only 10,000 voters +/-, it only takes a Block of 2,000-3,000 voters to control each Place of the City Council. That Established Block can be a very powerful force in every Council Election for every Council Place. I believe the Established Group has been just such a force for some time.

My proposed change is as follows.

I would like for the City Charter to be amended so that only voters living in Places 1,2,3, & 4 are eligible to vote for the candidates running for those respective Places. Those voters would still be eligible to vote for candidates running for Places 5,6,7, & 8. That would mean that in one election, a voter would vote for the candidate

in his Place plus the two at large candidates. The next election that same voter would vote only for the two at large candidates.

On the surface, this would seem like that voter is losing opportunities to vote, but I believe that the voter is presently losing all of his opportunities because the Establishment Block is cancelling most of his voting opportunities. So I believe the voter will gain.... not lose.

How would this address my concern? It would be much more difficult for the Established Group of Citizens to put a different Block of voters together for each of the 4 Single Member Districts than it is now. Now, they only have to have one block of 2000-3000 voters, but under my plan, they have to have 4 times as many.

NOW, to your concerns. I have heard that there are concerns that I favor Single Member Districts. Let me state clearly that what I have outlined above is only my current thinking. First, is a change for only 4 of the 8 council places. If elected, before I would attempt to implement this sort of change for Plano, I will seek the input and wisdom of the Plano Citizens. This would be an important change in our City Charter. I will seek your input into this plan so that I will propose what you, the citizens want. If you tell me that you want no change, I will respect that.

A change of this sort calls for a change in the City Charter and you have a vote if that change is to be made. The ultimate decision is yours, not mine alone. I was asked why I would want to make a change AFTER I am elected. My answer is so that those that follow me will not have to challenge such strong and unfair opposition from any Established Group as there exists today.

ED Acklin