



How to Circulate Petitions in the State of Illinois

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February 20th, 2026

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
CONTACT INFORMATION	3
RESOURCES	3
BALLOT ACCESS GOALS & DEADLINES	3
WHO CAN CIRCULATE & SIGN PETITIONS IN ILLINOIS?	4
THE IMPORTANCE OF NOTARIES	5
ROLES OF THE NOTARY PUBLIC	5
HOW TO BECOME A CERTIFIED NOTARY IN ILLINOIS	5
WHAT IS A COMPLETE SIGNATURE?	6
HOW TO FIX & PREVENT MISTAKES	7
HOW TO PREVENT FRAUD	7
PETITION OVERVIEW	8
HOW TO PROPERLY COLLECT SIGNATURES	9
WHERE SHOULD I CIRCULATE MY PETITION?	9
CHALLENGES TO EXPECT IN ILLINOIS	9
SIGNING THE AFFIDAVIT	10
HOW TO PROPERLY SECURE PETITION FORMS	11
WHERE DO I SEND MY COMPLETED PETITION?	11
MAPS OF IL HOUSE DISTRICT 112	11
112 NORTH	12
112 CENTRAL	13
112 WEST	14
112 SOUTH.....	15

Introduction

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you so much for stepping up and volunteering to help get Andrew Cottingham on the ballot here in the state of Illinois! As a resident of Illinois, you can help our candidate secure ballot access come **November 3rd, 2026** by taking up various roles, which include circulating petitions, notarizing petitions, and helping organize petition drives between **February 25th** and **May 18th-26th, 2026!**

In this packet, not only will you find the rules and guidelines you will need to be an effective petition circulator, but you will also find additional resources, contacts, and opportunities that will be available to you throughout this process! Unlike other campaigns, who typically hire third-party petition drive management companies & signature collecting firms, Team Cottingham has committed to implementing a ballot access strategy that will be grown 100% from the grassroots!

Obtaining ballot access will be no easy feat, especially with all the various rules, regulations, and restrictions our candidate faces, not to mention potential legal challenges by either political party; however, we are so incredibly grateful to have you join us in this great endeavor!

Thank you again for your support & commitment,
- Team Cottingham

Contact Information

Campaign

- andrew@electcottingham.us

Resources

Ballot Access Page: <https://electcottingham.us/ballot-access/>

Petitions sheets are also available to download and print from our ballot access page!

Ballot Access Goals & Deadlines

Illinois Petitioning Window:

(February 25, 2026 - May 18-26, 2026)

Illinois District 112 Signature Requirement:

(2,600 minimum)

Team Cottingham's Goal:

(3,000+)

- We will need to collect roughly **1,000 signatures (or more) a month.** (Roughly 3 months to work with)
- We will collect **additional signatures** because we need a buffer to combat disqualification.

Who Can Circulate & Sign Petitions in Illinois?

Who can circulate:

1. The circulator must be **18 years old.**
2. The circulator must be a **United States citizen.**
3. The circulator **does NOT have to be a resident of Illinois or IL House District 112.**
4. **Circulating a petition for a Democratic/Republican or another Independent candidate in the same election cycle will invalidate the circulator's petitions.**

Who can sign:

1. The petitioner must be **18 years old.**
2. The petitioner must be a **current resident of the State of Illinois.**
3. The petitioner must be a **registered voter in the State of Illinois.**
4. The petitioner must be a **current resident of IL House District 112.**
5. **Voting in the Democratic or Republican primary in 2024 will NOT invalidate the petitioner's signature.**
6. **Signing a petition for a Democrat, Republican, or another Independent candidate for the same office will invalidate the petitioner's signature.**

There are plenty of other ways one can contribute to our statewide petition initiative such as providing a place or business to petition at, providing resources such as paper/clipboards/pens, or by rallying your friends & family to help out as well. This

goes for all Illinois residents from within and outside of IL House District 112, & volunteers from neighboring states as well.

The Importance of Notaries

When it comes to petitioning in **Illinois**, the notary public is the most important role one can take in a local petition initiative. Like in many other states, **Illinois's Secretary of State requires that all petition forms be properly notarized prior to their final submission.**

Roles of the Notary Public

- While many assume that the notary's job is to notarize all of the signatures on the petition, that is false.
- The role of the notary is to **ensure that the circulator/affiant has properly signed the circulator's affidavit while in their presence.**
- The notary also **certifies that the information found within the petition is accurate.**

How to Become a Certified Notary in Illinois

According to the Secretary of State's website (**link below**), to become a notary in the state of **Illinois**, one must complete these steps.

- **IL Secretary of State** - <https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/index/notary.html>
- **National Notary** - <https://www.nationalnotary.org/illinois/become-a-notary>
- **Notaries.com** - <https://www.notaries.com/illinois>

What is a Complete Signature?

For a signature to be considered complete, it must contain the following:

1. **Signature of the petitioner** that **matches the signature on their driver's license & voter registration card.**
2. The **petitioner's name in print.**
3. The **full registered voting address** of the petitioner, which **must include their street number and street name.**
4. The **city/town/village** of the petitioner.
5. The **county** of the petitioner.

Here is an example of what a complete signature should look like.

NAME (VOTER'S SIGNATURE)	VOTER'S PRINTED NAME (optional)	STREET ADDRESS OR RR NUMBER	CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE	COUNTY
1. <i>Andrew Cottingham</i>	Andrew Cottingham	314 Sycamore St.	Collinsville ,IL	Madison
2.			,IL	
3.			,IL	

Fatal Mistakes:

- The **signature does not match** what is on their driver's license & voter registration card.
- The **registered address is incorrect.** (Street address & city/town/village must be precise)
- The **county does not match** the registered address.

How to Fix & Prevent Mistakes

- **If a mistake is made by the petitioner** while filling out their information on the petition, **simply strike through the entire line and move on to the line below it to start over.**

NAME (VOTER'S SIGNATURE)	VOTER'S PRINTED NAME (optional)	STREET ADDRESS OR RR NUMBER	CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE	COUNTY
1.			.IL	
2.			.IL	
3.			.IL	
.			..	

- **Stray Mark Rule: DO NOT cross out any text** or **allow any rips or tears** to be made to the petition form, for allowing such will result in the **INVALIDATION OF THE ENTIRE PAGE.**

How to Prevent Fraud

- As the **circulator of the petition**, **you are not permitted to correct mistakes made by the petitioner**, for **this is considered fraud** and will **INVALIDATE THE ENTIRE PETITION.**
- As the **circulator of the petition**, **you cannot allow someone to sign for another person**, for **this is also considered fraud** and will **INVALIDATE THE ENTIRE PETITION.**
- As the **circulator of the petition**, **you cannot allow one person to sign for members of their family**, for this is called **Family Fill-In, which is also considered fraud** and will **INVALIDATE THE ENTIRE PETITION.**
- As the **circulator of the petition**, **you must keep those who are signing your petition within your line of sight at all times**, which will **prevent fraud and other fatal mistakes** from being made.

These examples of **petition fraud by hand-of-another could be detrimental** to the success of our petition drives, which is why it is of great importance that we train our circulators to **avoid these fatal mistakes.**

(See page 9 under “IMPORTANT NOTE” for more)

Petition Overview

10 ILCS 5/10-2, 10-4, 10-5.1

X...BIND HERE...X

Custom Form
Revised February 2026**PETITION FOR NOMINATION**

We, the undersigned, qualified voters of the State of Illinois in the **112th Representative District**, do declare that it is our intention to form a new political party in the political division aforesaid, to be known and designated as the **Independence Party**, and do hereby petition that the following named person shall be candidate for the office hereinafter specified, to be voted at the **General Election** to be held on **November 3, 2026**.

THE NEW PARTY'S CANDIDATE IS HEREBY PRESENTED

NAME	OFFICE	ADDRESS - ZIP CODE
Andrew Stephen Cottingham	Representative in the General Assembly - 112th Representative District	314 Sycamore St. Collinsville, IL 62234

(A Full term is sought by each candidate in state unless an unexpired term is specified along with the office in the "OFFICE" space provided above)
If required pursuant to 10 ILCS 5/7-10.2, 8-8.1 or 10-5.1, complete the following (this information will appear on the ballot)
FORMERLY KNOWN AS _____ UNTIL NAME CHANGED ON _____

(List all names during last 3 years)

(List date of each name change)

NAME (VOTER'S SIGNATURE)	VOTER'S PRINTED NAME (optional)	STREET ADDRESS OR RR NUMBER	CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE	COUNTY
1.			,IL	
2.			,IL	
3.			,IL	
4.			,IL	
5.			,IL	
6.			,IL	
7.			,IL	
8.			,IL	
9.			,IL	
10.			,IL	

State of Illinois
112th Representative District

I, _____ (Circulator's Name) do hereby certify that I reside at _____, in the

City/Village/Unincorporated Area of _____ (if unincorporated, list municipality that provides postal service) (Zip

Code) _____, County of _____, State of _____ that I am 18 years of age or older (or 17 years of age and qualified to vote in Illinois), that I am a citizen of the United States, and that the signatures on this sheet were signed in my presence, not more than 90 days preceding the last day of filing of the petitions and are genuine and that to the best of my knowledge and belief the persons so signing were at the time of signing the petition registered voters of the political division in which the candidate is seeking elective office, and their respective residences are correctly stated, as above set forth.

(Circulator's Signature)

Signed and sworn to (or affirmed) by _____ before me, on _____
(Name of Circulator) (Insert month, day, year)

(SEAL)

(Notary Public's Signature)

SHEET NO. _____

How to Properly Collect Signatures

1. **Locate a place** to circulate your petition or host a petition drive.
2. **Wear your campaign gear or colors!**
3. **Approach people** in a friendly manner and ask, “*Are you a registered voter in the state of Illinois?*”
4. **If they say yes, ask them this.** “*Would you like to sign our petition to have Andrew Cottingham on the ballot this November?*”
5. **If they say yes, ask which IL House District they are from. If they say no or have signed already, thank them for their time.**
6. **If they are from IL House District 112, have them sign the petition.**
(Answer any questions / assistance) **If they are not from IL House District 112, politely inform them that only residents of District 112 can sign; however, they can support the campaign through volunteering and donating.**
7. **Verify their signature & information!**
8. **Thank them** for signing the petition, and **if they’re enthusiastic to help, ask them if they’d like to volunteer or donate as well.**
9. **(See Pages 11-12 for further instruction)**

IMPORTANT NOTE: You **MAY NOT** pay or provide anything of value or misrepresent the purpose & subject of this petition to **induce a person to sign!**

Where Should I Circulate my Petition?

Petitions should be circulated in areas where:

1. **Public property**
2. **There are many registered voters.**
3. **There is likely to be higher support for Mr. Cottingham.**
4. **There is high foot traffic. (public spaces & private places with permission*)**

***Marsh v. Alabama* – You must first ask permission from private property owners to circulate petitions on their property.** (They can remove you from their property at any time for any reason, or even no reason*)

Challenges to Expect in Illinois

- We fully **expect legal challenges** to be made against our signatures by either of the two major political parties.

Signing the Affidavit

As a circulator (affiant), not only is it your duty to **ensure that all the signatures you collect are both complete & valid** and to **prevent fraud**, but it is also your duty to **ensure that the circulator's affidavit is filled out correctly** as well.

Step 1: After you collect your last signature, you sign & provide your registered address on the lines provided below. (MUST be done in the presence of a notary public)

Step 2: After signing the affidavit in the presence of a notary public, you will give your petition to said notary, who will fill out the remaining information at the bottom of the form, which will officially notarize your petition!

- You **cannot notarize your own petition** if you are a notary.

State of Illinois
112th Representative District

I, Circulator's full name (Circulator's Name) do hereby certify that I reside at Circulator's street address, in the

City/Village/Unincorporated Area of Circulator's city/town/village (if unincorporated, list municipality that provides postal service) (Zip

Code) ZIP, County of Circulator's county, State of Illinois that I am 18 years of age or older (or 17 years of age and qualified to vote in Illinois), that I am a citizen of the United States, and that the signatures on this sheet were signed in my presence, not more than 90 days preceding the last day of filing of the petitions and are genuine and that to the best of my knowledge and belief the persons so signing were at the time of signing the petition registered voters of the political division in which the candidate is seeking elective office, and their respective residences are correctly stated, as above set forth.

CIRCULATOR'S SIGNATURE

 (Circulator's Signature)

Signed and sworn to (or affirmed) by Circulator's printed name before me, on Month, Day, 2026
 (Name of Circulator) (Insert month, day, year)

(SEAL)

NOTARY SIGNATURE

 (Notary Public's Signature)

SHEET NO. #

How to Properly Secure Petition Forms

- Once your petitions are notarized, you will need to **secure them in either a clasp envelope or a reliable folder/box.**
- Whichever method you choose, please **ensure that the package is waterproof, durable, and discreet to prevent any damage or theft** from occurring.

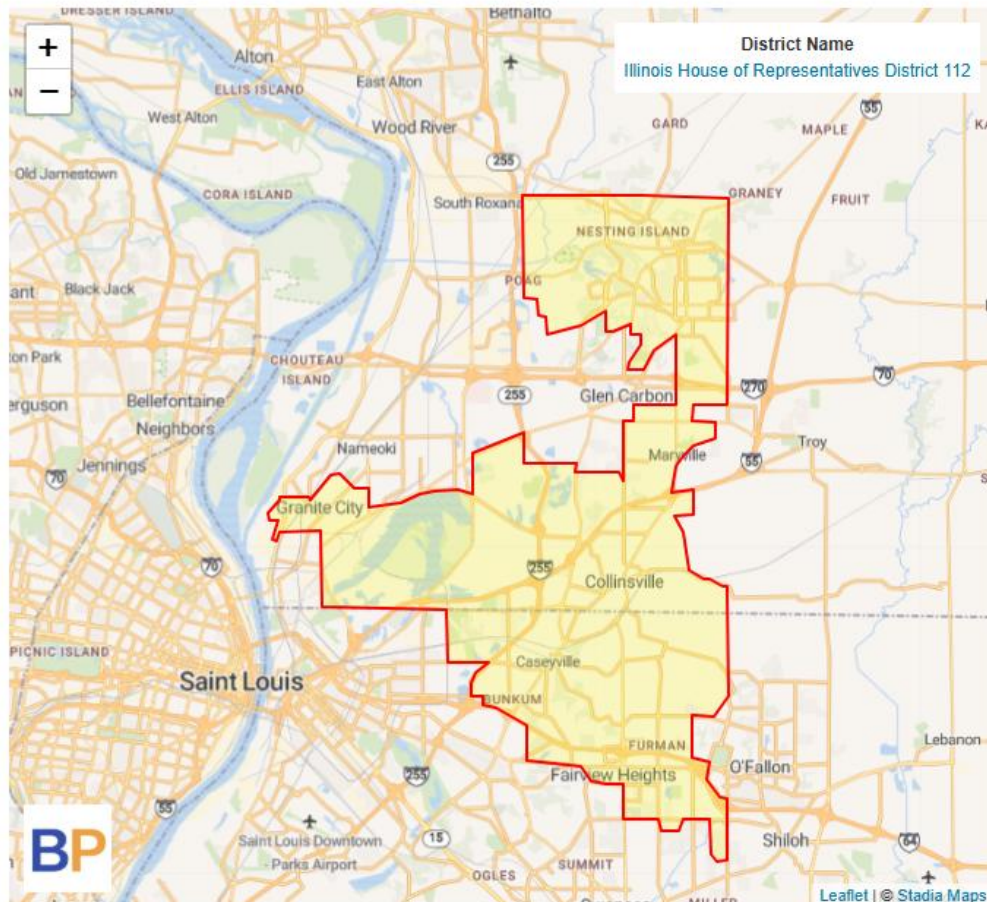
Where do I Send my Completed Petition?

- Mail or drop off notarized petitions to/at **314 Sycamore St., Collinsville, IL, 62234.**

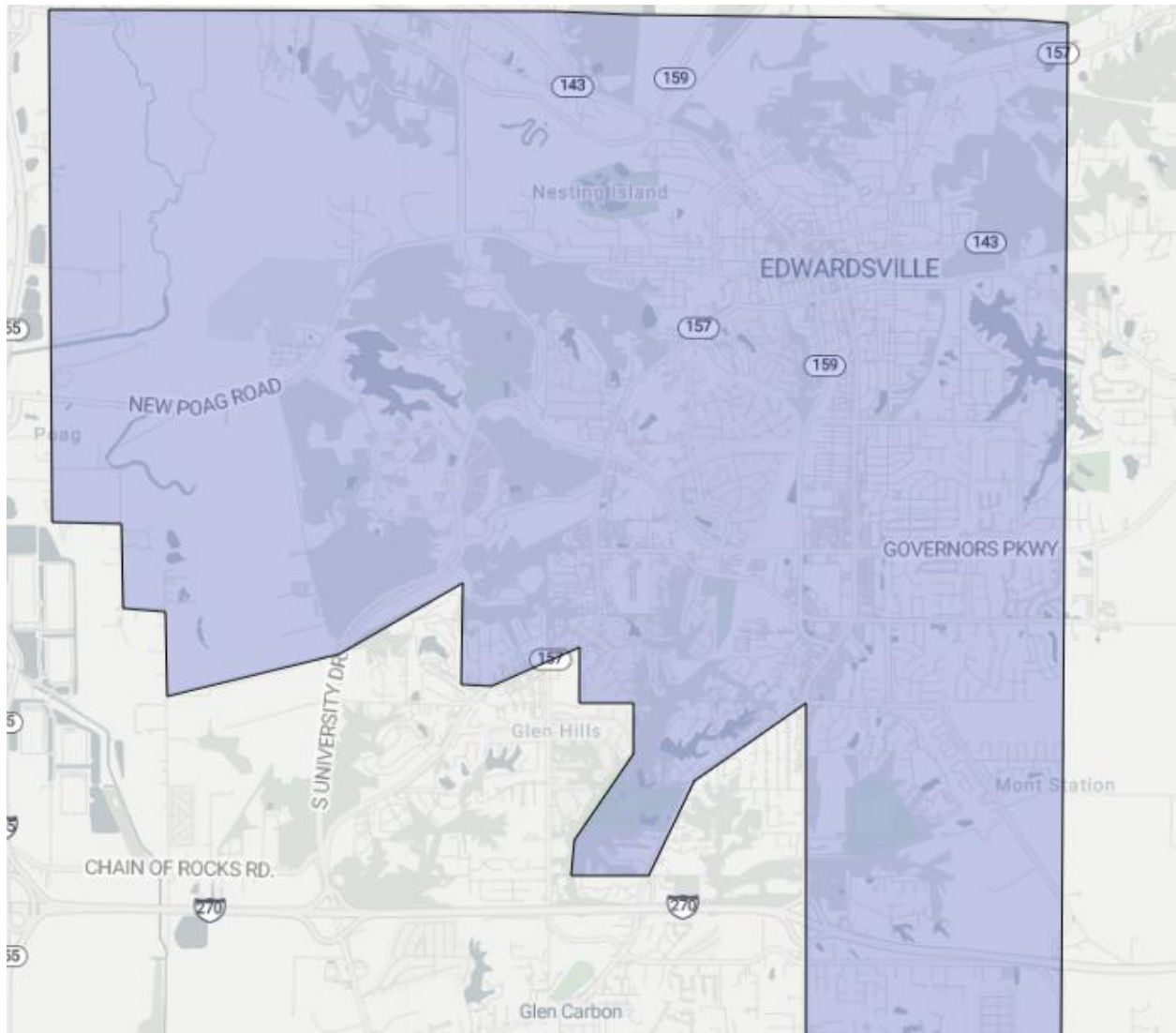
Maps of IL House District 112

Illinois House of Representatives District 112 starting January 11, 2023

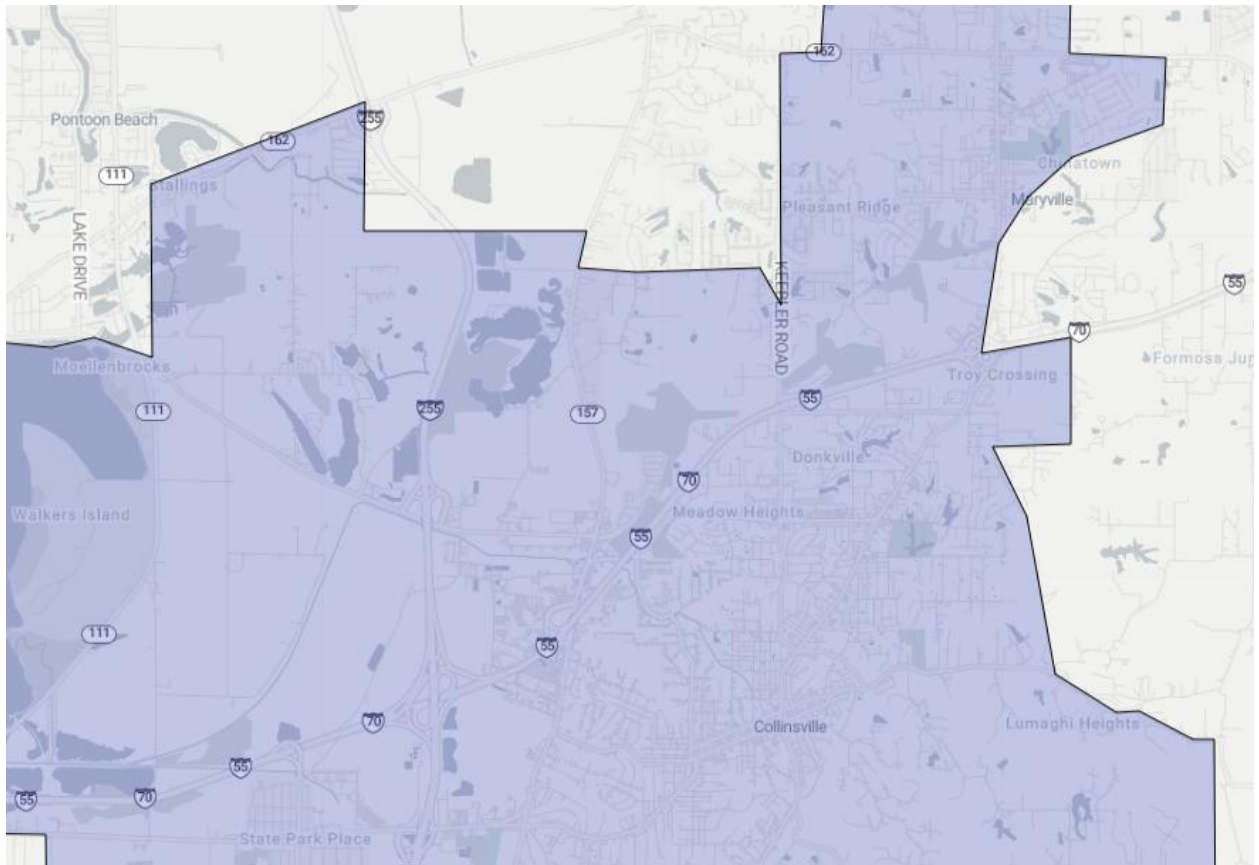
Click a district to compare boundaries.



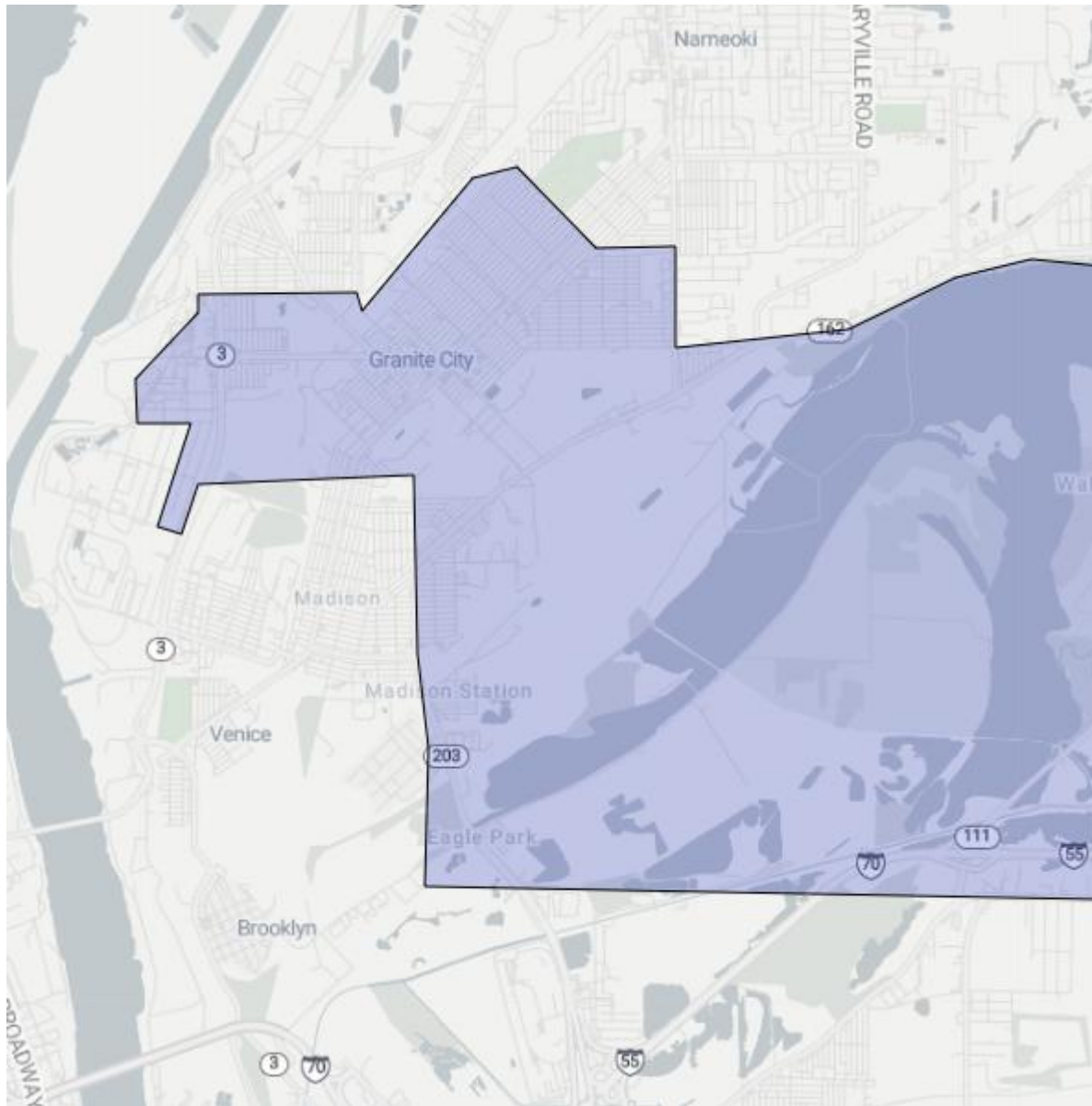
112 North



112 Central



112 West



112 South

