

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: SUE GALLAGHER, CITY ATTORNEY
STEPHANIE WILLIAMS, CITY CLERK
SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING – REDISTRICTING OF CITY COUNCIL
DISTRICTS: INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE TO ADOPT FINAL
MAP ESTABLISHING NEW DISTRICT BOUNDARIES FOR
ELECTION OF COUNCILMEMBERS (FAIR MAPS ACT) - FINAL
OF FIVE PUBLIC HEARINGS

AGENDA ACTION: PUBLIC HEARING AND ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the City Attorney and City Clerk that the Council: 1) hold a public hearing to receive input from the community regarding the composition of voting districts for the district-based election of Council Members, in accordance with Elections Code section 21627.1; and 2) introduce an ordinance adopting a new district boundary map for the election of City Council members beginning in 2022.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On December 7, 2021, the Council held the first in a series of public hearings in the process for the decennial review of City Council Member district boundaries. Cities with district-based elections are required to update (“redistrict”) the district boundaries every ten years, following the receipt of updated population data from each federal decennial census. Santa Rosa is required to redistrict the Council district boundaries prior to the next City Council election in 2022.

The Fair and Inclusive Redistricting for Municipalities and Political Subdivisions (FAIR MAPS) Act requires cities and counties to engage communities in the redistricting process. The process must include at least four public hearings, one of which may be conducted as a community workshop.

The four required public hearings have now been held. Draft district maps have been published, discussed and considered, including draft maps prepared by members of the public and by the City’s demographer. On March 1, 2022, following the fourth public hearing, Council directed staff to elevate Map A2 for consideration and adoption. This will be the fifth and final public hearing to receive input from the community regarding

adoption of a final map of voting districts for district-based elections of Council Members beginning in 2022.

BACKGROUND

On October 12, 2021, the Council held a study session at which it reviewed the process and standards for the redistricting of City Council member districts under the California Voting Rights Act and the Fair and Inclusive Redistricting for Municipalities and Political Subdivisions (FAIR MAPS) Act.

Pursuant to Elections Code section 21627.1, of the FAIR MAPS Act, the City Council is required to hold four public hearings in connection with the redistricting of electoral districts for City Council. One of those hearings may be held as a community workshop.

Pursuant to Elections Code section 21627.1, one of the four required public hearings must be held *before* any map or maps of the boundaries of the updated voting districts are drawn. The Council held this initial public hearing on December 7, 2021. This initial hearing provided the public an opportunity to provide input regarding preferences and criteria for the composition of the revised districts.

Three further public hearings were held following the first draft maps, one hearing on January 25, 2022, another, which was held as a community workshop, on February 17, 2022, and another on March 1, 2022, with additional maps submitted for presentation. Following the public hearing on March 1, 2022, Council directed staff to elevate Map A2 for final consideration and possible adoption.

The Council is now holding the fifth and final public hearing on the redistricting of Council voting districts. The Council will consider Map A2 as well as any new additional draft maps submitted for consideration by members of the public.

An on-line public mapping program has been placed on the City's website, open and available to all. By using that system or by submitting hard copy maps, any member of the public may propose new or revised Council district boundaries to be considered at this fifth and final public hearing.

Throughout the redistricting process, the City has taken steps to encourage residents, including those in underrepresented communities and non-English speaking communities, to participate in the redistricting public review process. In accordance with California Elections Code section 21628, efforts to encourage and facilitate public participation have included:

- Providing advance information to the media, including media that serve minority communities
- Encouraging engagement and providing information through both government and non-profit channels
- Providing live translation of all public hearings
- Maintaining recordings of all public hearings

REDISTRICTING OF CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS (FAIR MAPS ACT)

PAGE 3 OF 5

- Holding a public workshop in both English and Spanish
- Providing clear and early notice of the public hearings and the public workshop
- Providing opportunities for the public to draft and submit proposed maps both electronically and by paper copy
- Providing detailed population information in connection with proposed maps
- Ensuring that the final map is posted on the City's internet website for at least seven days before Council considered its adoption
- Maintaining a comprehensive webpage on the City's internet website dedicated to redistricting

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

October 12, 2021, Council study session to discuss the redistricting process.

December 7, 2021, First Public Hearing to receive community input on the criteria for redistricting prior to the drafting of maps.

January 25, 2022, Second Public Hearing, to receive community input on redistricting, receive a demonstration on the mapping tool DistrictR, present initial draft maps submitted by the public and the Consultant and to solicit input and receive feedback.

February 17, 2022, Community Outreach Public Hearing held at the Finley Community Center in both English and Spanish to receive a demonstration on the mapping tool DistrictR, solicit community input and receive additional draft maps for Council consideration.

March 1, 2022, Fourth Public Hearing, to receive community input on redistricting, present additional draft maps submitted by the public and the Consultant and to solicit input and receive feedback.

ANALYSIS

This is the fifth in a series of public hearings held by the City under Elections Code section 21627.1. The purpose of this public hearing is to consider a final map to update voting districts for district-based elections of Council Members following the 2020 Federal decennial census. If adopted, the new district map will govern Council Member elections beginning in November 2022.

As we head into this fifth public hearing, it is helpful to keep in mind that state and federal law set forth certain standards and criteria for redistricting. These include:

- Council districts shall be substantially equal in population.
- The redistricting plan must comply with the U.S. and California Constitutions, the Federal Voting Rights Act and state law.

- To the extent practicable, districts shall be geographically contiguous.
- To the extent practicable, the integrity of any local neighborhood or local community of interest shall be respected.
- District boundaries should be easily identifiable and understandable by residents.
- To the extent practicable, districts should be drawn to encourage geographical compactness.
- District lines must not be drawn for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against a political party.

The community is encouraged to review, with these factors in mind, proposed Map A2 and all other maps submitted for consideration. With this public hearing, the process of redistricting moves into its final stage.

The next and final step will be the adoption of an ordinance adopting a new District map to govern Council Member elections beginning this year.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Draft Map A2
- Attachment 2 – Metes and Bounds Map A2
- Attachment 3 – Draft Map A (previously reviewed)

REDISTRICTING OF CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS (FAIR MAPS ACT)
PAGE 5 OF 5

- Attachment 4 – Draft Map B (previously reviewed)
- Attachment 5 – Draft Map C (previously reviewed)
- Attachment 6 – Walsh Draft Map (previously reviewed)
- Attachment 7 - MAP ID 105165 (previously reviewed)
- Attachment 8 - MAP ID 114211 (previously reviewed)
- Attachment 9 - MAP ID 109846 (previously reviewed)
- Attachment 10 - MAP ID 105507 (previously reviewed)
- Attachment 11 - MAP ID 114636 (previously reviewed)

CONTACT

Sue Gallagher, City Attorney, 707-543-3040
Stephanie Williams, City Clerk, 707-543-3016