



Staff Reports

File #: 15-2020, **Version:** 1

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Tiffany Carranza, City Clerk

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TITLE:

Transition to District-Based Elections for Councilmembers

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive a presentation from the City's consulting demographer regarding the process and criteria for establishing district boundaries for District-Based Elections for City Councilmembers; and hold the first of two public hearings without maps of proposed district boundaries to receive public input regarding the boundaries and composition of districts.

DISCUSSION:

On February 11, 2020, the City Council adopted Resolution R2020-017 declaring its intent to transition from at-large elections to district-based elections of Councilmembers, outlining specific steps to facilitate the transition (including public outreach to solicit public input, and public hearings) and estimating a timeframe for the transition. This transition would be implemented for the November 3, 2020 general municipal election.

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 10010, the City is required to hold at least two public hearings over a period of no more than 30 days before any map or maps of the boundaries for the proposed voting districts are drawn. At these public hearings, the community is invited to provide input regarding boundaries and district composition.

Before developing draft district boundaries, the City's demographer (Paul Mitchell, of Redistricting Partners) will provide a presentation of the legal parameters which must be considered when preparing district boundaries. The City Council will then receive comments from the public at the two public hearings to understand the public's view of appropriate district boundaries, based on the required legal parameters. At the end of the second public hearing, the City Council will provide direction to City staff and the City's demographer regarding the criteria will be used, consistent with the required legal parameters, to create one or more proposed district maps. The City's demographer will then create one or more draft maps, which will be published for public comment and review at two subsequent public hearings.

The City Council will receive public input both about the district boundaries and sequencing of the district elections at the next two hearings and provide further direction to finalize a map and sequence of elections. The plan will then be incorporated into a recommended ordinance that will be presented to the City Council for action. The City Council is the final decision-making body on

adopting district boundaries. To ensure that the City falls within the “safe harbor provision” in the CVRA, which limits the City’s potential liability to prospective plaintiffs to no more than \$30,000, adoption of the ordinance must occur by May 11, 2020.

District Formation Criteria

Per Elections Code Section 21621(c), certain criteria must be considered to establish the boundaries of the four Council districts including the following, in order of priority:

- Equal population of residents in each district based on census data
- Compliance with the Constitutions of the United States and California, and with the federal Voting Rights Act
- Geographic contiguity
- Maintaining neighborhoods and local communities of interest: common social or economic interests (such as shopping, schools, home ownership, unemployment, median income). Note: Communities of interest do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates
- Boundaries easily identifiable and understandable to residents (e.g., geographical and topographical features such as rivers and creeks, or other physical barriers such as railroads or major streets)
- Geographic compactness is encouraged

The public is encouraged to provide input on some or all of these criteria.

The Council will consider the public input, and provide direction to staff based on that input. When selecting a districting plan, the Council may also choose to develop, within the limitations of State and Federal law, additional alternative criteria that are relevant to the City.

Next Steps

The next public hearing to receive and consider further input from the public concerning the composition of districts is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2020.

A detailed schedule setting forth the proposed meeting and public hearing dates:

Date	Hearing Type	Purpose of Hearing
Tuesday, February 25, 2020	1 st Public Hearing	Public Hearing without maps of proposed district boundaries, to provide information to the public and solicit input from the public and Council on composition of the districts

Wednesday, March 4, 2020	2 nd Public Hearing	Public Hearing without maps of proposed district boundaries, to provide information to the public and solicit input from the public and Council on composition of the districts
Sunday, March 8, 2020	Community Workshop (Public Event)	Public Meeting where Consultant will provide a presentation to the public, and solicit input from the public regarding proposed district boundaries
Tuesday, March 17, 2020	3 rd Public Hearing	Public Hearing with maps of proposed district boundaries produced by the demographer and published seven days in advance, and with a summary of comments received during the Community Workshop, for consideration and feedback by the public and Council
Tuesday, April 7, 2020	4 th Public Hearing	Public Hearing with revised map (s) of proposed district boundaries produced by the demographer and published seven days in advance; consideration of public input regarding the revised map(s), and introduction an ordinance establishing a district-based election system and map of district boundaries for Councilmembers
Tuesday, April 21, 2020	5 th Public Hearing	Public Hearing to adopt an ordinance establishing a district-based election system and map of district boundaries for Councilmembers

Demographer

The City has hired a firm skilled in demographic research and experienced with transitions to district elections. Sacramento-based Redistricting Partners is currently performing an analysis of Napa’s population numbers and demographics and will prepare draft district maps based on CVRA requirements, public input, and Council direction. Principal Paul Mitchell will present at the City Council meeting on February 25, 2020 about the population of the City and the considerations involved in creating maps. Redistricting Partners staff will be available at the remainder of the public meetings to assist with questions and provide guidance to the City Council related to the

development of the district maps. After the completion of two public hearings and a community workshop, Redistricting Partners will draw draft versions of district boundary maps for public review and comment before the City Council selects or revises a final map.

Public Outreach and Public Input

Members of the public will be able to provide comments on communities of interest and potential district map concerns or ideas during the Public Hearing at the Council meeting on February 25, 2020 and again on March 4, 2020. The public can also communicate with the City Council and the demographer in writing by sending an email to districts@cityofnapa.org [<mailto:districts@cityofnapa.org>](mailto:districts@cityofnapa.org). In addition, community members are strongly encouraged to complete a “communities of interest” worksheet which are available online at <https://www.cityofnapa.org/DistrictElections> [<https://www.cityofnapa.org/892/District-Elections>](https://www.cityofnapa.org/892/District-Elections) and in person at the City Clerk’s Office located inside City Hall.

To ensure that members of the public are informed, staff has developed a multi-faceted outreach plan to include messaging to community groups and organizations, with an emphasis on those that may include members who are specifically mentioned under the CVRA. Outreach efforts regarding the mapping process will include press releases to various outlets and groups, social media postings, notices displayed at various City facilities, updates via the City’s electronic newsletter “Napa News Weekly,” publication in the Napa Valley Marketplace magazine, and distributing information on the City’s website in both Spanish and English. A dedicated email address and webpage have been established for the districting process, and will be updated regularly throughout the process. The email address is districts@cityofnapa.org [<mailto:districts@cityofnapa.org>](mailto:districts@cityofnapa.org) and the link is: <https://www.cityofnapa.org/DistrictElections> [<https://www.cityofnapa.org/892/District-Elections>](https://www.cityofnapa.org/892/District-Elections).

In addition to the formal public hearings held at the City Council meeting, staff will hold a Community Workshop on Sunday, March 8, 2020 at the McPherson Elementary School. Redistricting Partners will provide presentations at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm, with hands-on exercises to draw sample maps after each presentation. Members of the public are welcome to drop in any time between 11:00 am and 3:30 pm, as their schedules permit. The Community Workshop will allow the opportunity for our demographer and staff to obtain input from the public regarding proposed district boundaries in a more informal setting. A summary of the comments received at the Community Workshop will be presented to the City Council at the public hearing held on Tuesday, March 17, 2020

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

There will be significant staff time needed to transition to district-based elections and to administer the process, including the need for at least four (4) public hearings. The City will also incur the costs for a demographer, special legal counsel, translation services and public outreach. Staff anticipates these costs being approximately \$50,000 - \$70,000. Additionally, it is anticipated that the City will be required to reimburse the proponent of the request for district-based elections for their documented attorney’s fees and costs up to a combined total of \$30,000, plus cost of living adjustments from 2017. At this time, staff is recommending no additional budget adjustments. There is a possibility current budget savings may absorb costs that will occur for the remainder of FY 2019-20. The related costs that will occur in FY 2020-21 will initially be absorbed with current budget and if additional appropriation is required staff will return to council during the FY 2020-21 mid-cycle budget review.

CEQA:

The City Clerk has determined that the recommended action described in this agenda report is not subject to CEQA, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c).

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

ATCH 1 - Community of Interest Worksheet

ATCH 2 - District Elections Flyer

NOTIFICATION:

A public hearing notice was published in the Napa Valley Register on Friday, February 14, 2020.