



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: AUGUST 16, 2022**
FROM: CITY CLERK **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: RESHAPE RIVERSIDE REDISTRICTING PROCESS AND CRITERIA PRESENTATION

ISSUE:

Receive a presentation from staff and the City's consulting demographer, Redistricting Partners, regarding the process and criteria for establishing new ward boundaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Receive and file a presentation on the Reshape Riverside Redistricting process and criteria for establishing new ward boundaries; and
2. Provide further direction as the City Council deems appropriate for implementing the City's Reshape Riverside Redistricting Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The City Council met and conferred on the procedural requirements for the Redistricting process during City Council meetings on October 12, 2021, November 16, 2021, and January 11, 2022. At which time, City Council discussed the City's proposed plan for community engagement, a tentative timeline for establishing the ward boundaries, a comprehensive report on the California Voting Rights Act, and the three redistricting commission methods.

On January 11, 2022, having considered the various redistricting approaches, the City Council unanimously appointed the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee (ICGC) to oversee and advise staff on the Redistricting process and approved the tentative timeline for the City's Reshape Riverside Redistricting plan.

Riverside City Charter Section 402 requires City Council to divide the city boundaries into seven wards, review the boundaries of those wards every ten years, and adjust those boundaries by ordinance to provide for a substantially equal number of residents in each ward. The resulting redistricting ordinance becomes effective thirty days after it is adopted, and the existing ward boundaries are to be used until that redistricting ordinance establishes new ward boundaries.

Under California Election Code Division 21, Chapter 7, Article 2, new wards established generally may not be changed until after the next decennial census in 2031. However, Riverside City Charter states that ward boundary adjustments may occur more frequently as determined necessary upon receipt of official census data. The City must adopt its ward boundaries no later than August 2023.

The substantive requirements of the Fair Maps Act for drawing ward boundaries are outlined in the California Elections Code §21621. To the greatest extent practicable, the City is required to adopt district boundaries using the criteria in the following order of priority:

1. Equal population of residents (+/- 10%) in each ward based on census data.
2. Comply with the United States and California Constitutions, including the Federal and California Voting Rights Acts (FVRA and CVRA).
3. Council wards shall be geographically contiguous.
4. The geographic integrity of any local neighborhood or local community of interest should be respected and included within a single ward for its effective and fair representation in a manner that minimizes its division.
5. Council wards should be easily identifiable and understandable by residents.
6. Council wards shall be drawn to encourage geographical compactness in a manner that nearby areas of population are not bypassed in favor of more distant populations.
7. Council ward boundaries shall not be established for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against a political party.

Riverside City Charter Section 402 sets forth an additional criterion that Council ward boundary adjustments during a Councilmember's term shall not result in disqualification for membership on the Council during such term.

DISCUSSION:

On July 19, 2022, the City Council approved a professional consultant services agreement with Redistricting Partners, LLC for demographic consulting services to assist staff with a coordinated effort to implement the City's redistricting plan in three phases.

Redistricting Partners will present on various topics to provide background information on the redistricting process, census data and timeline.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The City's Redistricting Plan contributes to the City Council's Envision 2025 Strategic Plan Priority and Goals:

Community Well-Being – Ensuring safe and inclusive neighborhoods where everyone can thrive with the following goal:

Goal 2.4 Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement, and build public trust: and,

High Performing Government – Providing world-class public service that is efficient, accessible, and responsible to all, with the following goals:

Goal 5.2 - Utilize technology, data, and process improvement strategies to increase efficiencies, guide decision making, and ensure services are accessible and distributed equitably throughout all geographic areas of the City.

Goal 5.3 - Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

The Redistricting process aligns with the Envision 2025 Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The establishment of a redistricting format and the outreach strategy that includes workshops in every ward to draft new ward boundaries are resident-led participation and public input, creating sound policy, inclusive of community engagement in the decision-making process.
2. **Equity** – Community members will utilize interactive tools. Some may participate in a redistricting commission to ensure that newly established ward boundaries comply with federal and state laws that encourage equity for all stakeholders.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Riverside is a prudent steward of public funds and ensures responsible management of the City's financial resources while providing quality public services to all. The City Clerk's Office is committed to exploring services provided internally instead of consultants and looking for creative ways to reduce the redistricting program's fiscal impact and outreach efforts.
4. **Innovation** – Riverside's Redistricting Framework includes a marketing strategy that will consist of non-English languages, including American Sign Language. The redistricting website will host interactive tools promoting collaborative public partnerships with redrawing ward boundaries.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – Riverside is committed to meeting the present needs without compromising the needs of the future and ensuring the City's capacity to persevere, adapt and grow during fluctuating times alike. Reviewing the ward boundaries every ten years is essential to maintain sustainable and resilient representation for a more sustainable future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Donesia Gause, City Clerk

Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachment:

1. Riverside Redistricting 2022 Presentation