



EL CAJON
CITY COUNCIL

Hillside Recreation Center
840 Buena Terrace
El Cajon, CA 92020

Special Meeting Agenda

JULY 14, 2021 6:30 p.m.

Bill Wells, Mayor
Gary Kendrick, Mayor Pro Tem
Michelle Metschel, Councilmember
Steve Goble, Councilmember
Phil Ortiz, Councilmember

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Bill Wells

ROLL CALL: City Clerk, Angela Cortez

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Public Hearing to Receive Input from the Community Regarding Redistricting

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council:

1. Receives report from staff about the redistricting process;
2. Opens the Public Hearing and receives testimony; and
3. Closes the Public Hearing.

ADJOURNMENT: The Meeting of the El Cajon City Council held this 14th day of July 2021, is adjourned.



City Council
Agenda Report

DATE: 07/14/2021
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
FROM: Dave Richards, Assistant to the City Manager
SUBJECT: Public Hearing to Receive Input from the Community Regarding Redistricting

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council:

1. Receives report from staff about the redistricting process;
2. Opens the Public Hearing and receives testimony; and
3. Closes the Public Hearing.

BACKGROUND:

This agenda report provides an overview of the redistricting process, laws and principles, and an update on the City's efforts in the redistricting process. This report also opens the public hearing to gather public input about communities of interest, which are necessary for the preparation of the updated map identifying the four districts (District Election Map).

Redistricting Overview

Redistricting is the process of adjusting City Council voting districts so that each district has substantially the same number of voting-aged residents. Cities with voting districts are required to update the District Election Map following the release of the centennial US Census data.

El Cajon transitioned from an at-large to a by-district election process for Councilmembers with the passage of Measure S in November 2016. The Mayor remains elected at-large.

Following the passage of Measure S, the City retained the National Demographic Corporation (NDC) to develop the voting district maps and facilitate public hearings. In June 2017, the City Council approved the current District Election Map. It is important to note that the map was developed using the 2010 US Census data with 2017 demographic estimates.

The transition to City Council districts means that the City must evaluate and potentially adjust its voting districts based on the 2020 US Census. The US Census Bureau plans to release the 2020 Census data on or around **September 30, 2021**. To comply with the Voting Rights Act, the City must approve a District Election Map no later than 205 days ahead of the November 8, 2022, General Election, or by **April 17, 2022**.

Redistricting Laws and Principles

There are numerous federal, state, and local redistricting laws with which cities must comply.

The Federal Voting Rights Act (Federal Act) prohibits “gerrymandering” based on race. “Gerrymandering” is the process of manipulating district boundaries in order to favor one party or class. The Federal Act also allows district maps to be legally challenged by a protected class if the district racially dilutes voters. Federal law also requires districts to have substantially equal populations, which courts have defined as 10 percent or less deviation between the lowest and highest voting populations.

The courts have also upheld several redistricting principles. For instance, election district maps must keep districts compact, contiguous, defined by visible (natural and manmade) boundaries, and include communities of interests—or groups with similarities other than race.

Most recently, the California legislature passed AB 849 known as the “Fair and Inclusive Redistrict for Municipalities and Political Subdivision (FAIR MAPS) Act in 2019, and AB 1276 in 2020. AB 1726 provided cleanup language and clarification of the FAIR MAPS Act. The FAIR MAPS Act requires cities to take additional steps to increase public engagement in the redistricting process. It increases the number of required public hearings to four; provides for translated website materials and live translation services when requested in advance; mandates a dedicated redistricting webpage; and establishes noticing requirements. The FAIR MAPS Act also requires cities to make an asserted effort to alert media outlets and community groups about the process.

Redistricting Update and Public Hearing

In February, the City began an extensive search for a consultant who could provide demographic, meeting facilitation, and online mapping services. Of the responsive bids, NDC submitted the lowest bid. On June 23, the City executed an agreement with NDC to assist the City with the redistricting process.

To gather community input in the redistricting process, and as required by the FAIR MAPS Act, four public hearings are scheduled. Each of these hearings will be located in a different City Council District to ensure the City receives a wide variety of community input. The hearings are scheduled on:

- Wednesday, July 14, 6:30 p.m. at the Hillside Recreation Center;
- Wednesday, September 8, 6:30 p.m. at the Renette Recreation Center;
- Thursday, November 4, at 7:00 p.m. at the Kennedy Recreation Center; and
- Saturday, January 22, at 10:30 a.m. at El Cajon Valley High School.

During the first public hearing on July 14, NDC will gather public input about communities of interest. The second public hearing will continue to focus on communities of interest and also will introduce an online mapping tool. The last two public hearings will be used to review and discuss draft maps and ultimately select the final district map.

Staff has developed and begun executing a community outreach and marketing plan that meets and exceeds the FAIR MAPS Act requirements. The FAIR MAPS Act requires cities to post

information on its website in multiple languages specified by the California Secretary of State. For El Cajon, these languages are Spanish, Arabic, and Somali. In addition to the required website materials, the City has translated and distributed press releases, social media posts, and flyers to school districts, media outlets, and non-English speaking community groups.

The City's outreach has also included identifying and contacting various community, civic, ethnic, and cultural groups in El Cajon. The City provided translated marketing materials to these groups and offered presentations about the redistricting process. As the redistricting process continues, the City will continue to engage with these community groups, media outlets and other community partners.

Prepared By: David Richards, Assistant to the City Manager

Reviewed By: Vince DiMaggio, Assistant City Manager

Approved By: Graham Mitchell, City Manager

Attachments

NDC Redistricting Presentation



City of El Cajon

Introduction to Redistricting

July 14, 2021

Shannon Kelly, Consultant
National Demographics Corporation

Redistricting Process

Step	Description
Initial Public Hearing July 14	Held prior to release of draft maps Education about the process and Communities of Interest
Census Data Release Mid/Late August	Census Bureau releases official 2020 Census population data
Public Hearing #2 September 8	Continue Education about the process and solicit input on Communities of Interest Provide overview of online mapping tools for public use
California Data Release Late September/Early October	California releases official “prisoner adjusted” 2020 redistricting data
Public Hearing #3 November 4	Discuss and review draft maps Solicit feedback from the public about draft maps
Public Hearing #4 January 22	Revised maps posted online and available at City of El Cajon Discuss and revise recommended final map options and discuss the election sequence
Map Adoption Deadline April 17, 2022	(Election Minus 205) Statutory deadline to adopt map ordinance

Why Are We Doing this Again so Soon?

Every 10 years the federal government conducts a census and each City must update its election districts to reflect the latest population counts

The City of El Cajon, through Measure S, voted to move from an at large to district election system in 2016. District maps were drawn in 2017 using 2010 population counts. 2018 was the first election where City Council members were elected by district

Has the makeup of the districts really changed enough to require a new map?

Updated population figures may show that current districts are out of balance and the new California Fair Maps Act created new criteria that must be considered



Redistricting Rules and Goals

1. Federal Laws

Equal Population
Federal Voting Rights Act
No Racial Gerrymandering



2. California Criteria for Cities

1. Geographically contiguous
2. Undivided neighborhoods and “communities of interest”
(Socio-economic geographic areas that should be kept together)
3. Easily identifiable boundaries
4. Compact
(Do not bypass one group of people to get to a more distant group of people)

Prohibited:

“Shall not favor or discriminate against a political party.”

3. Other Traditional Redistricting Principles

Minimize voters shifted to different election years
Respect voters’ choices / continuity in office
Future population growth
Preserving the core of existing districts

Defining Neighborhoods

1st Question: What is your neighborhood?

2nd Question: What are its geographic boundaries?

Examples of physical features defining a neighborhood boundary:

- Natural neighborhood dividing lines, such as highway or major roads, rivers, canals and/or hills
- Areas around parks or schools
- Other neighborhood landmarks

In the absence of public testimony, planning records and other similar documents may provide definition.



Beyond Neighborhoods: Defining Communities of Interest

1st Question: What defines your community?

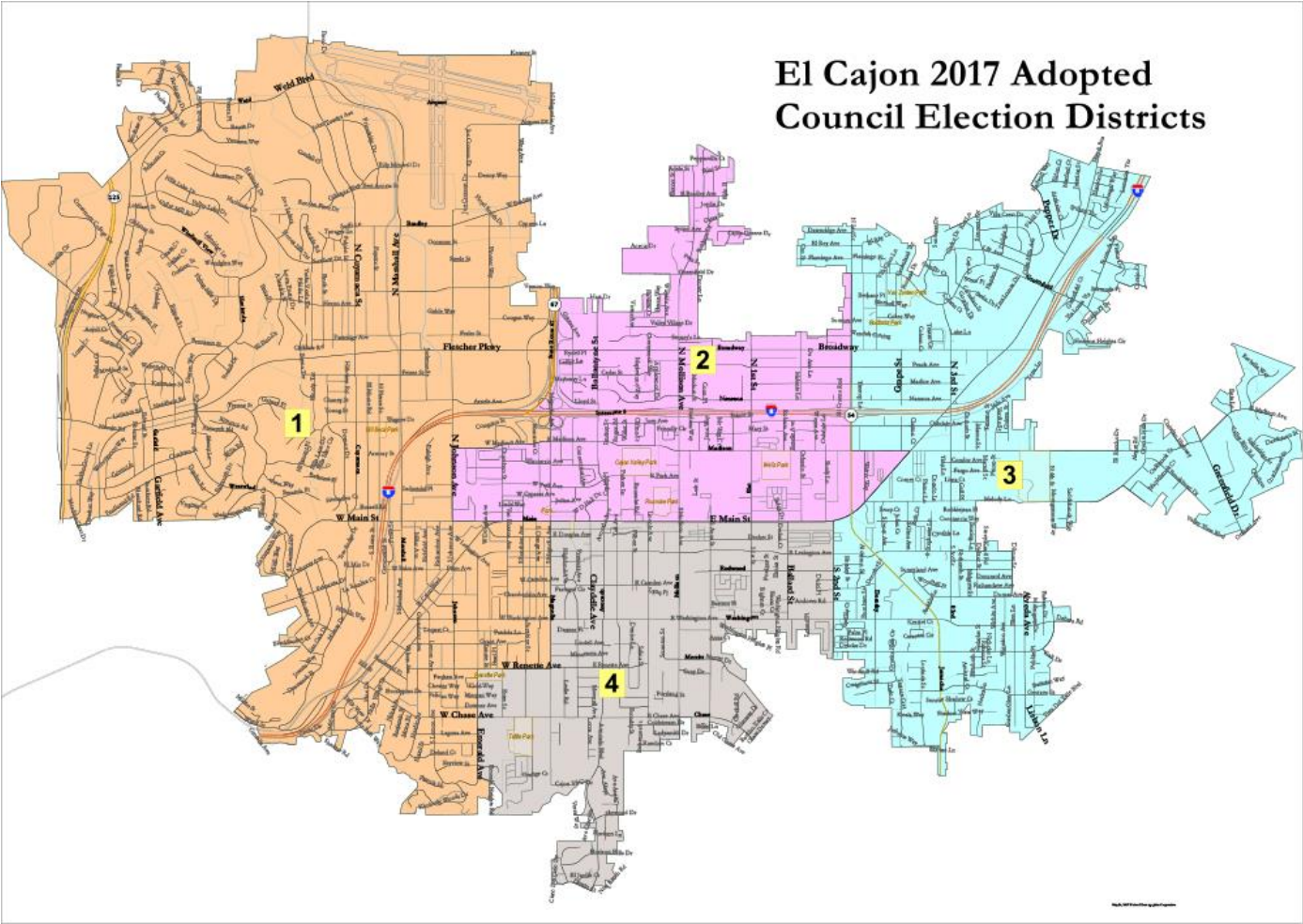
- Geographic Area, plus
- Shared issue or characteristic
 - Shared social or economic interest
 - Impacted by county policies
- Tell us “your community’s story”

2nd Question: Would this community benefit from being “included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation”?

- Or would it benefit more from having multiple representatives?

Definitions of Communities of Interest may not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

Possible Neighborhoods / Communities



Beyond Neighborhoods: Communities

Under the California Elections Code, “community of interest” has a very specific definition in the context of districting and redistricting cities and counties:

A “community of interest” is a population that shares common social or economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation.

Communities of interest do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

(emphasis added)

Public Hearing & Discussion

What is your neighborhood and what are its boundaries?

What other notable areas are in the City, and what are their boundaries?

What are the key Communities of Interest in El Cajon?

- Geographic Area, plus
- Shared issue or characteristic
 - Shared social or economic interest
 - Impacted by county policies
- Other unifying characteristics

Next Steps

Access the City of El Cajon Redistricting Page for More information:

<https://www.cityofelcajon.us/your-government/elected-officials/redistricting>

Provide comments:

redistricting@elcajon.gov

SECOND PUBLIC HEARING (September 8)

Further Discussion and Actions on Communities of Interest

Introduction of Public Mapping Tools