



CITY OF CARSON

Legislation Text

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Report to Mayor and City Council

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

Special Orders of the Day

SUBJECT:

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE REDISTRICTING OF ESTABLISHED CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE 2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS ON REDISTRICTING

I. SUMMARY

In 2020, the City of Carson adopted City Council districts for the four City Council seats, with the Mayor's seat remaining at large. Every ten years, districts must be redrawn so that each district is substantially equal in population. This process, called redistricting, is important in ensuring that each city councilmember represents about the same number of constituents. In the City of Carson, the Mayor and City Council are responsible for drawing council districts. Redistricting is done using U.S. Census data, which was released in September 2021. For the City of Carson, the redistricting process must be completed by April 17, 2022.

The City is required to hold two public meetings on the districts during this initial process before the City Council draws a draft map or maps of the proposed council boundaries, and at least two public hearings after the Council has drawn a draft map or maps of the proposed council boundaries.

This formal public hearing will be followed by a less-formal public workshop on December 4, 2021 at the Community Center. Draft maps will be produced in January, after which the City will conduct a series of public meetings in the parks and a series of public hearings leading to adoption. The purpose of the public meetings conducted prior to the publication of maps is to elicit comments from members of the public on their "communities of interest," including the cohesiveness of neighborhoods and communities, other physical and geographic boundaries, and other factors.

II. RECOMMENDATION

1. OPEN the public hearing;
2. TAKE public testimony; and

3. CLOSE the public hearing.

III. ALTERNATIVES

TAKE another action the City Council deems appropriate.

IV. BACKGROUND

In 2020, the City of Carson adopted City Council districts for the four city council seats, with the Mayor's seat remaining at large. Every ten years, districts must be redrawn so that each district is substantially equal in population. This process, called redistricting, is important in ensuring that each city councilmember represents about the same number of constituents. In the City of Carson, the Mayor and City Council are responsible for drawing council districts. Redistricting is done using U.S. Census data, which was released in September 2021. For the City of Carson, the redistricting process must be completed by April 17, 2022.

The redistricting process is conducted under Elections Code Sections 21608 and 21620 et seq., and the public hearing process is described in Section 21627.1.

2020 Census Data

The 2010 US Census recorded Carson's population at 91,714 and the US Census estimated Carson's 2018 population at 91,626, a slight decline from 2010. However, the official 2020 Census data puts the population at 95,994 or an increase of about 4,000 residents for more than 4% growth over the past decade, greater than expected.

The review of the data shows that the population increase did not result in any of the districts adopted in 2020 becoming "unbalanced" under the California Voting Rights Act or applicable constitutional requirements. There may be other reasons the City Council or the community wish to change the configuration of the districts, but there is not a demographic necessity to do so. A map of the current Council District boundaries is included as Exhibit 1.

In addition to the requirements that the districts be substantially equal in population and comply with the U.S. Constitution, the California Constitution, and the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, the City Council is required to adopt district boundaries using the following criteria as set forth in the following order of priority:

(1) To the extent practicable, council districts shall be geographically contiguous. Areas that meet only at the points of adjoining corners are not contiguous. Areas that are separated by water and not connected by a bridge, tunnel, or regular ferry service are not contiguous.

(2) To the extent practicable, the geographic integrity of any local neighborhood or local community of interest shall be respected in a manner that minimizes its division. 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.

(3) Council district boundaries should be easily identifiable and understandable by residents. To the extent practicable, council districts shall be bounded by natural and artificial barriers, by streets, or by the boundaries of the City.

(4) To the extent practicable, and where it does not conflict with the preceding criteria, council districts shall be drawn to encourage geographical compactness in a manner that nearby areas of population are not bypassed in favor of more distant populations. Elec. Code §21621(c).

Before adopting the council district boundaries (via adoption of an ordinance or resolution), the City is required to hold two public meetings on the redistricting process during this initial process publication of any draft redistricting maps being produced. This public hearing will be followed by a public workshop on December 4, 2021 at the Community Center, also prior to any draft redistricting maps being produced. Section 21627.1 (b) states that at least one public hearing or public workshop shall be held on a Saturday, on a Sunday, or after 6 p.m. on a weekday Monday through Friday. The December 4 meeting is on a Saturday and all other public meetings are conducted after 6:00 pm.

The City has selected Bear Demographics, Inc. to assist with this process. The principal of the firm, Andrew Westall, will lead tonight's discussion. This discussion will consider the currently adopted Council district map and solicit public input on what factors to consider when preparing any revised maps and provides an opportunity for the residents to comment and ask questions. Draft maps will not be drawn or presented at this meeting but will be developed by the demographer in consideration of the community's input.

Redistricting Calendar

The schedule for the redistricting process generally follows the same timetable that was followed in 2019-2020 for the original adoption of the Council districts. At least two public meetings must be conducted prior to the publication of any draft maps, and the first public hearing to consider such maps must be conducted at least seven days after the publication of the maps. The entire process must be completed by April 17, 2022.

Section 21627.1 of the Elections Code requires that (a) Before adopting a final map, the council shall hold at least four public hearings at which the public is invited to provide input regarding the composition of one or more council districts.

(1) At least one public hearing shall be held before the council draws a draft map or maps of the proposed council boundaries.

(2) At least two public hearings shall be held after the council has drawn a draft map or maps of the proposed council boundaries.

After the first two meetings are held, the draft maps will be published on or before January 11, 2022. The public hearings for the public to provide input and the City Council to

consider the maps would be held from mid-January through mid-March, which provides some extra time prior to the April deadline if it is needed. The public hearing schedule is included as Exhibit 2.

For public workshops that are not a public hearing, they may be noticed as special meetings, to allow for compliance with the Brown Act if more than two members of City Council plan to attend.

In addition, there will be several community meetings held in the parks, as the City did during the original process. A schedule of these meetings is included as Exhibit 3. The schedule is included in the Winter 2022 Carson Report and staff will work with the park volunteer associations in order to increase turnout at these meetings. In addition to using the City's own parks, staff is still working on arranging meetings at other locations that could host these workshops, such as schools, churches, and other private facilities. The demographer would join several of the larger presentations and staff will conduct the smaller workshops.

Other Activities

Section 21608 of the Elections Code includes the following direction for cities:

- (a) The council shall take steps to encourage residents, including those in underrepresented communities and non-English speaking communities, to participate in the redistricting public review process. A good faith effort satisfies the requirements of this subdivision. These steps shall include the following:
 - (1) Providing information to media organizations that provide city news coverage, including media organizations that serve language minority communities.
 - (2) Providing information through good government, civil rights, civic engagement, or community groups or organizations that are active in the city, including those active in language minority communities, or that have requested to be notified concerning city redistricting.

The public hearing notice for this meeting was provided in applicable languages (e.g., Spanish and Tagalog) and other flyers and materials will be translated as well. The City will notify the public about redistricting public workshops and public input hearings, post maps online before adoption, and create a dedicated web page for all relevant information about the redistricting process as it did during the 2019 process. The three Public Hearings Notices for this meeting are included as Exhibits 4, 5, and 6.

Section 21608 also requires the City to establish, and maintain for at least 10 years after the adoption of new council district boundaries, an internet web page dedicated to redistricting. The web page may be hosted on the city's existing internet website or another internet website maintained by the city. The web page shall include, or link to, all the following information:

- (1) A general explanation of the redistricting process for the city in English and any

applicable language.

- (2) The procedures for a member of the public to testify during a public hearing or to submit written testimony directly to the council in English and any applicable language.
- (3) A calendar of all public hearing and workshop dates. A calendar listing that includes the time and location of the public hearing or workshop satisfies the notice required by subdivision (c).
- (4) The notice and agenda for each public hearing and workshop.
- (5) The recording or written summary of each public hearing and workshop.
- (6) Each draft map considered by the council at a public hearing.
- (7) The adopted final map of council district boundaries.

That website is being established and all future materials related to redistricting will be loaded onto it. The link to the site is <https://carsonca.gov/redistrict> <<https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/kzLpCJ69KMS7NEfGCmb3?domain=carsonca.gov>>.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

Aside from the cost of the demographer, preparation of flyers and notices, and the cost of the public meetings, the establishment of Council districts and the redistricting process does not have a significant fiscal impact.

1. VI. EXHIBITS

1. Map of the Current Council District Boundaries (pg. 6)
2. Public Hearings Schedule (pg. 7)
3. Public Meetings Flyer (Meetings in Parks) (pg. 8)
4. Public Hearing Notice in English (pg. 9 -10)
5. Public Hearing Notice in Spanish (pg. 11-12)
6. Public Hearing Notice in Tagalog (pg. 13-14)

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