



Staff Report

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**File #:** 22-0149

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**REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

**DATE:** 02/16/2022

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** City Manager's Office - City Clerk

**SUBJECT:**  
Public Hearing for the redrawing of Council Member District Boundaries.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Every ten years, upon the release of the decennial census data, the City of Corona must redraw its five (5) City Council districts based on the new census data and criteria outlined in state law so that the districts correctly reflect current populations. Conducting the public hearings will fulfill the requirements needed so that the districts are redrawn and are substantially equal in population as required by the United States Constitution. The U.S. Supreme Court has generally defined 'substantially equal' as no more than a 10% deviation between the least and greatest populated districts.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the City Council:**

- a. Receive a report from staff and the City's redistricting consultant on the redistricting process, and review draft maps and permissible criteria to be considered to redraw district boundaries.
- b. Conduct a public hearing to receive public input on district boundaries.
- c. Potentially select a preferred map.

**BACKGROUND & HISTORY:**

Pursuant to Election Code section 21601, cities with by-district election systems are required to redraw their district boundary maps to ensure compliance with the California and Federal Voting Rights Acts. The process to complete the redistricting requires a minimum of four public hearings and dedicated public outreach to ensure minority populations and communities of interest are aware

of the redistricting effort and are provided with options to participate. The City held the first of the four required hearings on January 5, 2022. The City conducted a Community Workshop on January 27, 2022, at the Corona Public Library, providing a brief overview of the redistricting process and highlighting the online mapping tool. The proposed map was shared with the community at the end of the workshop. Public comments during the workshop centered on the area north of Highway 91 and west of Main Street. Public speakers reported that newly constructed “apartment homes” in the area did not share the same community of interest as the residents south of Highway 91 in the Circle City area, and therefore were better suited in District 2. Recognizing this had been a point of discussion during the transition to district-based elections, staff concurred and requested the consultant redraw the draft map accordingly for consideration. The revised Map Option 1 was presented to Council at the second of the four required public hearings held on February 2, 2022. The City also recreated a dedicated redistricting website, [www.remapcorona.org](http://www.remapcorona.org), where interested persons may find all related documents and hearing information for the redistricting process, which to date has been visited 96 times by 62 unique IP addresses (62 individual users)

### **ANALYSIS:**

Every ten years, cities with by-district election systems must use new census data to review and, if needed, redraw district lines to reflect how local populations have changed. This process, called redistricting, ensures all districts have a nearly equal population. The City of Corona must complete the redistricting process by April 17, 2022.

The City adopted its current district boundaries in 2016, with the passage of Measure N, which authorized the transition to districts process. The map approved with Measure N was drawn based on 2010 census data as required by law. The districts must now be redrawn using the 2020 census data and in compliance with the Fair Maps Act, which was adopted by the California legislature as AB 849 and took effect January 1, 2020.

Under the Fair Maps Act, the City Council shall draw and adopt boundaries using the following criteria in the listed order of priority (Elections Code 21621(c)):

1. Comply with the federal and Voting Rights Act requirements of equal population within each district.
2. Be geographically contiguous.
3. Undivided neighborhoods and “communities of interest” (socio-economic geographic areas that should be kept together).
4. Display easily identifiable boundaries.
5. Be compact (do not bypass one group of people to get to a more distant group of people).
6. Shall not favor or discriminate against a political party.

Once the prioritized criteria are met, other traditional districting principles can be considered, such as:

- Minimize the number of voters delayed from voting in 2022 to 2024.

- Respect voters' choices/continuity in office.
- Future population growth.

By law, the City must hold at least four public hearings that enable community members to provide input on the drawing of district maps:

- At least one hearing must occur before the city or county draws draft maps.
- At least two hearings must happen after the drawing of draft maps.
- The fourth hearing can happen either before or after the drawing of draft maps.
- City or county staff or consultants may hold a public workshop instead of one of the required public redistricting hearings.

To increase the accessibility of these hearings, cities, and counties must take the following steps:

- At least one hearing must occur on a Saturday, Sunday, or after 6:00 p.m. on a weekday.
- If a redistricting hearing is consolidated with another local government meeting, the redistricting hearing must begin at a pre-designated time.
- Local public redistricting hearings must be made accessible to people with disabilities.

The City's current district boundaries, adjusted for the 2020 Census data, show that the districts remain population-balanced. The City's 2020 census population is 157,679. The ideal district population is one-fifth of that number, or 31,536. Population balance is determined by measuring the spread, or deviation, between the least populated district and the greatest populated district. Deviations of 10% or less are generally considered acceptable under U.S. Supreme Court rulings on the equal population standard under the U.S. Constitution. The City's current deviation is 9.08%, which is under the 10% permissible standard. As such, the Council may choose to re-adopt their existing district boundaries following the required public hearings.

Another consideration is the distribution of minority voters throughout the City, and whether there is a possibility of creating a majority/minority voting district as addressed in the federal Voting Rights Act. This analysis involves reviewing the ethnic demographics from the census data, specifically citizens of voting age populations (CVAP). Upon reviewing the City's CVAP data, creating a majority/minority voting district (a district in which an identified minority comprises the majority of the voting-age population) is possible. Districts 2 and 3 are currently majority/minority Hispanic voting districts. A complete demographic breakdown of the existing districts is attached to this report (Exhibit 1).

Following the first public hearing, the City's redistricting consultant prepared one potential map option, should the Council wish to consider adjusting districting boundaries. The map is summarized

below and accompanying demographic information may be found attached to this report (Exhibit 2).

Additionally, an online tool for closely examining the boundaries, with zoom and search capabilities, may be found through the below link:

[Corona - Google My Maps](#)

Map Option 1 is population balanced, reduces the deviation to .96% (less than one percent), and preserves the core of existing districts. The proposed map also preserves Districts 2 and 3 as majority/minority Hispanic voting districts. The differences between the existing map and Option 1 are summarized as follows:

- The southern boundary line between Districts 4 and five moves from Garretson Avenue west to Kellogg Avenue before rejoining Garretson Avenue south of Chase Drive.
- The western boundary line between Districts 1 and 5 moves from a general line along Ontario Avenue farther west in one area, traveling south along Fullerton Avenue to Santana Way, and then back over to Rimpau Avenue, where it rejoins the existing boundary at Taber Street.
- Two pockets of population in Districts 2 and 3 are exchanged, generally in the area bounded by Lincoln Avenue and Main Street, and the northern City limits and Highway 91.

Following Public Hearing No. 2, one map was received from a member of the public, and that map is presented as Option 2. However, as the map was hand-drawn, the map is not included in the online Google link referenced above. The map is summarized herein, and the submitted image is included in Exhibit 2.

Map Option 2 is not population balanced. The author of the map expressed a desire to shift the area generally bounded by Ontario Ave to the south, Magnolia Ave to the west, and the 15 freeway to the east, from District 1 to District 5. Reasons for the requested shift centered on the distance between the subject area and the most easterly boundaries of District 1 and the general use of businesses located in District 5 versus District 1. However, the subject area consists of 5,874 residents, and to move the entire area as requested with no accompanying offset of population creates a total deviation of 36.48%. Should the Council want to examine Option 2 further, Council may provide direction as to areas where the population may be offset to maintain a total deviation of 10% or less, as required by federal law. Alternatively, the City's consultant can review the surrounding districts and provide options to offset the population shift and lower the deviation.

The purpose of this public hearing is to inform the public about the districting process further, review the draft maps, and hear from the community on what factors should be taken into consideration while creating district boundaries. The public will be provided with an opportunity to give input regarding communities of interest and other local factors, which should be considered while drafting district maps. A community of interest under the relevant Elections Code for cities (Section 21621(c)) 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."

**Next Steps:**

Following this hearing, the City's redistricting consultant will create any revised map(s) for consideration at Public Hearing 4, if directed by the City Council. The draft maps will be posted to the City website and available at City Hall before the hearings. At the conclusion of the public hearing, Council may select a preferred map for consideration at the fourth public hearing, scheduled for March 2, 2022. If Council selects a preferred map, staff will include the introduction of an ordinance approving the final map at the March 2, 2022, public hearing.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this request.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action is to receive public input on district boundaries, and there is no possibility that this project will have a significant effect on the environment.

**PREPARED BY:** SYLVIA EDWARDS, CITY CLERK

**REVIEWED BY:** ROGER BRADLEY, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

**Attachments:**

1. EXHIBIT 1 - Existing District with Demographic Data
2. EXHIBIT 2 - Map Option 1 with Demographics Data and Map Option 2