



Staff Report

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**File #:** 22-0209

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**REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

**DATE:** 03/16/2022

**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 percent deviation between the least and greatest populated districts. This public hearing was continued from the March 2, 2022 City Council meeting.

**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 and introduce by title only and waive the full reading of Ordinance 3345, first reading of an Ordinance regarding by-district elections, adjusting the boundaries of City Council Election Districts and Confirming such revised Council District Boundaries as reflected in the attached 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 comment regarding the proposed map centered on the area north of Highway 91 and west of Main Street. Public speakers reported the newly constructed “apartment homes” 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. The revised Map Option 1 was presented to Council at the second of the four required public hearings held on February 2, 2022. A third public hearing was held on February 16, 2022.

**ANALYSIS:**

Every 10 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:

1. Minimize the number of voters delayed from voting in 2022 to 2024.
2. Respect voters' choices/continuity in office.
3. 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 citizen voting-age population) is possible. Currently, District 3 is a majority/minority Hispanic voting district using the CVAP metric. 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 (Map Option 1), should the Council wish to consider adjusting districting boundaries. After the second public hearing, a member of the public submitted a hand-drawn map (Map Option B), which is not included on the Google link identified below but is included in Exhibit 1. At the third public hearing, the City Council requested the City's consultant examine the possibility of creating a second

majority/minority Hispanic voting district, and a second consultant map (Map Option 2) was prepared. In addition, two maps (Map Option 3 and 4) have been received from members of the public. Each of the maps are summarized below, and accompanying demographic information may be found attached to this report (Exhibit 1).

### ***Map Option 1***

Map Option 1 is population balanced, reduces the deviation to 6.9%, and preserves the core of existing districts. The proposed map also preserves District 3 as a majority/minority Hispanic voting district. Map Option 1 makes a number of changes from the existing map. The southern boundary line between Districts 4 and 5 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.

### ***Map Option B***

Subsequent to Public Hearing No. 2, one map was received from a member of the public. That map is presented as Option B, however as the map was handdrawn, the map is not included in the online Google link referenced above. The map is summarized here, and the submitted image is included in Exhibit 2. Option B 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%. This map is not recommended as it has a noncompliant deviation.

### ***Map Option 2***

Option 2 was prepared by the City's consultant after the third public hearing, in an attempt to create a second majority/minority Hispanic voting district. The map is population balanced, with a total deviation of 4.92%. A second majority/minority Hispanic voting district was drawn by moving population between Districts 2 and 3, primarily in the area west of Lincoln Avenue south of Corona High School, and north of State Highway 91 (SR 91) west of Main Street. Districts 1, 4, and 5 remain unchanged from Option 1. The population north of SR 91 is separated from the remainder of the "circle" community of interest by both the freeway and Main Street. Moving this population From District 3 to District 2 offsets the increase of population in District 3 by extending the portion south of the high school west of Lincoln Avenue.

### ***Map Option 3***

Option 3 was submitted by a member of the public. Option 3 is population balanced, with a deviation of 3.47%. Option 3 is similar to Option 2, in that it moves the same populations between Districts 2 and 3. It also moves additional population between Districts 1 and 3 and does not extend District 1 west of Main Street, which affects the total population in District 2. As a result, the map draws one

majority/minority Hispanic voting district (District 3).

**Map Option 4**

Option 4 was submitted by a member of the public. It is population balanced, with a deviation of 5.37%. The map is a more significant change from the existing boundary map, with changes in all five districts. District 3 extends west to Border Avenue, while District 2, north of SR 91, extends east to Interstate 15. It draws District 2 and District 3 as majority/minority Hispanic voting districts. Because it moves a significant number of people from all five districts, approximately 400 people are transferred from 2022 voting districts to 2024 voting districts, a deferral of two years in their election cycle.

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 Council may select a preferred map and introduce the Ordinance approving the final map. The public is requested to provide input regarding communities of interest and other local factors that 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:

Council, may, at the conclusion of the public hearing, select a preferred map and introduce the Ordinance approving the final map. Alternatively, the Council may direct revisions to one or more maps which would be presented at a future public hearing. The deadline to complete the redistricting process for the City of Corona is April 17, 2022.

**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 Districts and Draft map with Demographic Data

2. EXHIBIT 2 - Ordinance approving the final boundary map