

Questions & Answers

District Election – Community Forum #1, November 10, 2016 – 6:00 pm

1. Would it be possible to examine the district maps adopted by the Redlands Unified School District?
 - a. Those districts are much larger than the City of Redlands itself and contain portions of other cities. They were approved under a different process and will not contain a comparable population size for the districts being considered by the City.
2. Has the City ever used a district election system prior to the one currently being considered?
 - a. Yes, but not in a “by-District” form wherein each candidate must reside within a specified election district and is elected only by voters residing within that election district. From- District Elections were first adopted in 1989, and in 1991, as a result of annexation and census, the districts were adjusted by a citizen committee & approved by Council. Again in May 1993, the Council adjusted the map per CA Elections Code Sect. 35101. Later November 1993, the district system was overturned by voters in favor of At-Large elections.
3. What group has threatened the City with legal action if it does not pursue district elections?
 - a. The city has received a letter from MALDEF, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.
4. What is the City’s timeline for implementing this change?
 - a. The City plans to submit its change to district elections to the San Bernardino County Registrar of Voters during the first half of 2017. The first election cycle that these changes will apply to is in 2018, for districts 1, 3, & 5.
5. What are the various map boundaries based on?
 - a. The boundaries are based on a Council resolution adopted in August 2016. This resolution outlines the federal and state requirements for districting and can be found here: <http://ci.redlands.ca.us/clerk/2016staffreports/160816I1-att.pdf>
6. How are renters or out-of-state transient populations accounted for (like college students who are registered to vote elsewhere, but reside in City limits for part of the year)?
 - a. Each map is based on data collected from the decennial census and each jurisdiction is required to use census data as has been demonstrated through case law.
7. Are there regular reviews of districts after new census data is published?
 - a. It becomes an automatic review as a part of new census data being published. The new data doesn’t necessarily require the redrawing of district boundaries if there are no significant changes, however if there are significant changes to population or distribution of racial minorities then changes may be required.
8. Is the map entitled “Reiter-1” still open for consideration?
 - a. It is not. This map did not meet federal & state standards to be considered a “legal” map and sometimes people withdraw their maps by choice.

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9. Who decides what map will be adopted?
 - a. Government code requires the governing body of a jurisdiction, in this case the City Council, to approve the map and legally adopt it.

10. How does the State perform its redistricting?
 - a. Through Proposition 11, the CA redistricting amendment, the State changed its constitution and is able to redistrict based on recommendations from a Redistricting Commission that votes on and approves changes.

11. What if citizens challenge a district map?
 - a. That is always a possibility, however in court the citizen must show cause and must show that there is a violation of law. Courts do not get involved with allegations of “gerrymandering”.

12. Why doesn't the City form a citizens' commission similar to what the State has done?
 - a. Generally, smaller cities do not have the need to form a commission nor the means to fund one. A commission will require funding for independent counsel, commissioner training, commission staffing, materials, city staff support, overhead costs, per diem traveling expenses. These costs have been known to exceed \$50,000-\$70,000 on average.

13. What do the red dotted lines represent on each map?
 - a. Those are the neighborhoods within Redlands as identified by the General Plan steering committee.

14. What is the difference between Latino and Hispanic, both are referenced in the participation materials?
 - a. The decennial census employs the term Hispanic. State laws and regulations reference Latino.

15. Can the Mayor or another member of City Council be elected at-large with the rest of the Council elected by-district?
 - a. The only way the map can pass a full legal challenge and meet all requirements of the CA Voting Rights Act is if each member of City Council is elected based on the by-district method.