



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: OCTOBER 12, 2021

DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION

FROM: Patricia M. Barajas, City Clerk
Christopher A. Callihan, City Attorney
Lapkoff & Gobalet Demographers

TITLE: REDISTRICTING SALINAS 2021 PROCESS

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

No recommended motion. Consider the 2020 Census population deviations and provide direction to staff on next steps.

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider 2020 Census population deviations, whether to undertake the redistricting process without a Redistricting Advisory Committee, methods of obtaining community outreach, and timeline.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Every ten years upon the release of the decennial census data, the City of Salinas shall adjust the boundaries of any or all its six (6) City Council Districts based on the new census data and criteria set forth in state law and the City Charter. Pursuant to Salinas Charter Article 2, Section 2.4, the City Council must adjust the boundaries so that each district shall be nearly equal in population according to the latest federal decennial census. Based on the 2020 Census data, the current Council districts are still sufficiently equal in population. This means that the current plan could remain in effect. A new state law (the FAIR MAPS act) requires that the City hold at least four public hearings, even if the Council retains the current election districts.

This report discusses the proposed steps, timing, criteria, and public outreach for the City's 2021-22 redistricting process.

BACKGROUND:

Following receipt of updated population data from the 2020 Census, cities in California with electoral districts are required to update their district boundaries. The City Charter sets forth requirements for the City's redistricting process. In addition, the State's FAIR MAPS Act establishes additional redistricting requirements for cities, including charter cities like Salinas.

In 2011 the City Council established a Redistricting Advisory Committee to receive public input and recommend new district boundaries. The City Council may establish a similar Advisory Committee for the 2021-22 redistricting process if the Council wishes to consider adjusted district boundaries. An Advisory Redistricting Committee application process, member qualifications, and appointments will need to be established by the Council. State law prohibits any elected official of the City, or a family member, staff member, or paid campaign staff of an elected official of the City to be appointed to the Committee. The Committee's primary role is to receive public input and provide recommendations to City Council about draft maps. The City Council, however, is not required to accept the Committee's recommendation nor to establish a committee.

The State of California adopted the Fair and Inclusive Redistricting for Municipalities and Political Subdivisions ("FAIR MAPS") Act. The Act established additional requirements for cities, including charter cities, when redistricting. These requirements direct the City to (1) hold a series of public hearings, (2) undertake community outreach efforts to encourage participation, and (3) dedicate a specific place on the City's webpage for redistricting information.

Before adopting a final redistricting map, the State FAIR MAPS Act requires the City to hold at least four hearings for the public to provide input about the composition of districts:

- At least one hearing before any maps are drawn.
- At least two hearings after maps are drawn.
- At least one hearing or workshop to be held on a Saturday, Sunday, or after 6 p.m. on a weekday.

An Advisory Commission, if established, can hold one of the required four hearings (instead of the City Council), but the Council is required to hold at least two public hearings after the maps have been drawn.

The City must also take steps to encourage residents, including those in underrepresented and non-English speaking communities, to participate in the redistricting public review process. This can be accomplished by:

- Providing information to media organizations that offer City news coverage, including those serving language-minority communities,
- Providing information through good government, civil rights, civic engagement and community groups or organizations that are active in the City, including those active in language minority communities and those that have requested to be notified about City redistricting,
- Upon request made at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting, conducting the public hearings with live translation in a requested "applicable language."
- Publishing the date, time, and location of any public hearing or workshop on the internet at least five days before the hearing. Draft maps must be published online at least seven days before adoption.

The City is also required to establish and maintain a page on its website dedicated to redistricting that includes:

- (1) a general explanation of the redistricting process;

- (2) procedures for a member of public to testify during a public hearing or submit written testimony;
- (3) a calendar of all public hearings;
- (4) the notice and agendas for those hearings;
- (5) recordings or written summaries of all hearings; and
- (6) all draft and final maps considered and adopted by the City Council.

The general description of redistricting and procedures on how to testify must be in English and any applicable language. This information is to be maintained for at least ten years after the redistricting process is completed.

Our demographers have determined that the official (California Statewide Database) counts show that our Council districts are still sufficiently equal in total population that they can be used until after the 2030 U.S. Census. Election district populations do not need to be exactly equal. Some leeway is permitted: a deviation of up to 10 percent from the ideal district population is permitted between the most and least populated council districts. In our case, the current plan's deviation is 7.3 percent. Thus, there is no imperative to change council districts in order to balance the Council district populations.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The redistricting process supports the City's goals by continuing to address the quality of life of all residents and long-term community investment.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The City Clerk's Office will work in coordination with City Attorney's office, the GIS Administrator and with direction from the demographers to ensure compliance with all local, state and federal requirements. Additionally, staff will work with the various city department to support public engagement and participation efforts.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

In February 2021 the City Council approved a professional services agreement with Lapkopff & Gobalet Demographers and appropriated \$100,000 to cover the cost of a Redistricting Consultant and expenses thereof. No additional fiscal impacts have been identified at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

AB 849