

**CITY OF SANTA PAULA
MEMORANDUM**

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jonathan Royas, Management Analyst

Subject: DISTRICTING – THIRD PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE INPUT AND TESTIMONY REGARDING PROPOSED DRAFT DISTRICT MAPS SUBMITTED, COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES, AND COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

Date: January 18, 2023

Agenda Item: 11.B

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Receive an updated presentation from staff, Dr. Justin Levitt of National Demographic Corporation (NDC), and Sydni Overly of Tripepi Smith regarding the process for developing options for City Council voting districts, to be implemented in November, 2024;
2. Consider, discuss, and provide direction or revisions to draft Council District Maps submitted;
3. Conduct a public hearing to receive public input on district boundaries; and
4. Receive and file public input on composition of Council District boundaries, communities of interest, and draft maps.

Presented by: Jonathan Royas, Management Analyst
Dr. Justin Levitt, NDC
Sydni Overly, Tripepi Smith

BACKGROUND:

On February 22, 2022, the City received a letter from attorney Jason Dominguez on behalf of "a large segment of the population and on behalf of Laura Espinosa" demanding an end to the at-large Council election system.

In response to that letter, on April 6, 2022, the City Council discussed its options and unanimously adopted Resolution No. 7393, indicating its intent to change the election system from at-large to by-district elections. Given the litigation risk and associated financial impact on the City, the City Council asked to enter into a settlement agreement with Mr. Dominguez and directed staff to move the districting process forward. The criteria to comply with all legal

requirements to establish council district boundaries is spelled out in California law and in the Council's adopted Resolution No. 7393. No settlement agreement could be reached with Mr. Dominguez.

On May 4, 2022, Council provided staff direction to work with the City's existing public relations firm and to utilize our contract with BB&K law firm to select a qualified demographer. Through that process, National Demographics Corporation (NDC), was selected.

As required by Elections Code Section 10010, the City will hold at least two (2) public hearings and a community workshop prior to the release of draft maps of Council election districts, followed by a community workshop and two additional Council hearings to solicit public input regarding the content of the draft maps and the proposed sequence of elections. Then an additional public hearing will be held prior to the approval of an ordinance that provides for district elections, approves the Council-selected map, and sets forth the steps to implement district elections.

On August 3, 2022, Council held its first public hearing whereby Dr. Daniel Phillips, from NDC, shared with Council and the public a presentation on the districting process to solicit input on the neighborhoods and communities of interest in the City.

On August 17, 2022, Council held its second public hearing whereby Council received an updated presentation from staff and NDC regarding the process for developing options for City Council voting districts; provided staff and NDC direction regarding any optional criteria Council wanted to consider in the development of voting district options; and conducted a public hearing to receive public input on district boundaries.

In addition, the City hosted three community workshops to educate and engage the community on the districting process and demonstrate how to use the map drawing tools provided by the consultant team. Below are the details of the three workshops.

September 14, 2022 @ 6:00PM (See Exhibit B for attendee brainstorm results)

Santa Paula Cultural Arts Building @ The Santa Paula Community Center
530 W Main Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060

October 6, 2022 @ 6:00PM

Recorded Virtual Community Workshop via Zoom is available at www.drawsantapaula.org

December 1, 2022 @ 6:00PM (See Exhibit B for attendee brainstorm results)

Church of Guadalupe
427 N Oak Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060

The item before Council this evening is the third of four public hearings required by the FAIR MAPS Act.

ANALYSIS:

In accordance with the FAIR MAPS Act, the City Council has held two initial public hearings to inform the public about the districting process and to hear from the community on what factors should be taken into consideration when creating City Council district boundaries. This third public hearing is the first hearing to review and discuss draft maps of proposed districts that

have been submitted by members of the community. The fourth public hearing is scheduled for the City Council's regular meeting of February 15, 2023, at which time the City Council is expected to identify and introduce an ordinance to adopt its preferred map.

Community Outreach

The City and consultant team of NDC and Tripepi Smith kicked off the districting process the week of June 3, 2022 with the website www.drawsantapaula.org going live and outreach coordination initiated. Additionally, the email districting@spcity.org was also set up to begin receiving communications from the public in one central location. As a result, the City leveraged a full array of outreach platforms to connect with the public as discussed more fully in Exhibit A, District Formation Process Outreach Summary Report.

To date, the City has reached the community through the following:

- Email and/or phone contact with nearly 120 community leaders, organizations, residents and media contacts to proactively outreach to key stakeholders with districting related information.
- Rollout of the districting website, DrawSantaPaula.org, where extensive resources are available for the public to learn about the districting process, access all meeting materials and meeting information, draw maps based upon their understanding of communities of interest and submit them for consideration by City Council.
- Distributed an online neighborhood survey to develop a list of neighborhoods and "communities of interest" – DrawSantaPaula.org/Neighborhood-Survey
- 30 social media posts in English and Spanish published across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Nextdoor from July 1, 2022 – January 17, 2023.
- Five flyers in English and Spanish to promote upcoming community meetings.
- Four press releases in English and Spanish distributed to the City's media contacts.
- Four Channel 10 advertisements to promote upcoming community meetings.
- Four community meetings to discuss the districting process and gather public input on neighborhoods and "communities of interest."
- Publication of a mapping tool in English and Spanish in the Santa Paula Times to solicit draft maps.

Following the January 18, 2023 hearing, the City plans to conduct the following outreach activities:

- Email outreach to nearly 120 community leaders, organizations, residents and media contacts to proactively outreach to key stakeholders with districting related information.
- 10-12 social media posts in English and Spanish published across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Nextdoor from January 18, 2023 through March/April 2023.
- An additional flyer in English and Spanish to promote final districting meetings.
- An additional press release in English and Spanish distributed to the City's media contacts.
- An additional Channel 10 advertisement to promote final districting meetings.
- An additional community meeting to gather public input on submitted maps.

It is important to note that all materials, social media posts, community workshops, and activities related to the districting process were conducted in both English and Spanish to maximize our public engagement.

Districting Rules and Goals

The community was encouraged to submit proposed maps for the January 18, 2023 public hearing for Council's initial consideration and discussion, which included maps and feedback on "communities of interest." A "community of interest" is a neighborhood or group that would benefit from being in the same district because of shared interests, views, or characteristics. Possible community features include, but are not limited to:

- School attendance areas;
- Natural dividing lines such as major roads, waterways, train tracks, hills, or highways;
- Areas around parks and other neighborhood landmarks;
- Common issues, neighborhood activities, or legislative/election concerns; and
- Shared demographic characteristics, such as:
 - Similar levels of income, education, or linguistic insolation;
 - Languages spoken at home; and
 - Single-family and multi-family housing unit areas.

Additionally, the City must ensure compliance with the following state and federally-mandated criteria:

Federal

- Each district shall contain a nearly equal population.
- Each district shall be drawn in a manner that complies with the Federal Voting Rights Act.
- Each district shall not be drawn with race as the predominant factor in violation of the principles established by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Shaw v. Reno*, 509 U.S. 630 (1993), and its progeny.

State

- Each district shall be contiguous.
- Each district should avoid dividing neighborhoods and communities of interest.
- Each district should be bordered by easily identifiable boundaries such as major roads or rivers. Each district should be compact.
- Districts shall not be drawn to favor or disfavor a political party.

It should also be noted, in addition to the legal criteria, City Council may choose to adopt optional criteria to be used in the development of the districts. Optional criteria varies by community--some direct that specific criteria be used in addition to the legal criteria, while others use only the legal criteria. Examples of provided optional criteria that have been used in other communities are as follows:

- The boundaries of the districts may consider avoiding pairing two or more incumbents in a single district, insofar as this does not conflict with the constitution and laws of the State of California and the United States.
- To maintain a longer-term population balance, districts known to be areas of higher than-average population growth following districting may be under-populated within the population deviation amounts allowed by law.

The boundaries of the districts may comply with such other factors which become known

during the districting process and are formally adopted by the City Council.

Draft Revised City Council District Maps

The City and the consultant team accepted draft maps from the public for this third Public Hearing up until January 6, 2023 (see Exhibit C). Prior to the January 6, 2023 deadline, a total of ten (10) draft maps were submitted by the public. After careful review and analysis by NDC, eight (8) of the submitted draft maps meet the requirements of the Voter Rights Act as described above, and two (2) of the submitted draft maps do not meet the requirements of the Voter Rights Act. One (1) map was not population-balanced (Map 103) and one (1) is a single-district map (Map 110). Additionally, fifteen (15) uncompleted maps, provided in Exhibit A, were submitted recommending no districting at all and were in favor of “one” district or at-large elections.

The city’s demographer, Dr. Justin Levitt, also prepared four (4) draft City Council district boundary maps (Maps 111, 112, 113, and 114) based on the legal criteria outlined in past meetings, including consideration of communities of interest as provided by the community at the Community Workshops held in September, October, and December. The draft maps are intended for discussion purposes only; the demographer is not recommending approval of any proposed map. Dr. Levitt reviewed each map and prepared a demographic summary for each public submittal. Each of the proposed maps were posted on the City’s Districting webpage for public access and review (www.drawsantapaula.org).

Staff and the demographer are requesting that the City Council hold a public hearing, take testimony from the public and provide input on the draft maps submitted through January 6, 2023. Please note the City will continue to receive draft maps from the public until the final deadline of February 1, 2023, and will have posted all draft maps to the website at www.drawsantapaula.org by February 8, 2023, with the final set of draft maps to be reviewed and the anticipation of a map selected at the February 15, 2023, fourth Public Hearing.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This item is not a goal or objective within City Council's two-year Strategic Plan.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

The City is spending approximately \$100,000 on the two consulting firms assisting the City with this highly specialized districting process. On May 4, 2022, Council set aside \$50,000 for anticipated expenses. Staff will be coming to Council with a mid-year budget adjustment request for an additional \$50,000 to complete the districting process.

OPTIONS:

ATTACHMENTS:

[Exhibit A - District Formation Process Outreach Summary Report](#)

[Exhibit B - Community Workshops.pdf](#)

[Exhibit C - Draft Maps.pdf](#)