



## CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

### PUBLIC HEARINGS AGENDA ITEM NO. C.1

**DATE:** February 16, 2022

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Stephen Fischer, City Attorney, (805) 385-7483, stephen.fischer@oxnard.org

**SUBJECT:** Public Hearing Regarding Redistricting of City Council Districts (15/30/30)

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the City Council conduct a public hearing regarding the redistricting process for City Council districts, including taking public testimony regarding the six maps that the City Council selected to move forward for further consideration (NDC Maps 201, 203 and 203A and Public Maps 4, 6 and 7) and the three maps that were submitted prior to the February 7, 2022 deadline for map submittal (Public Maps 9, 10 and 11).
2. That the City Council approve a motion to select one of the proposed District maps and direct that the matter be brought back to the City Council on March 1, 2022 for the introduction of the ordinance to adopt the District map by amending Appendix A to Oxnard City Code Section 2-4.

*Because the presentation will be made by a consultant, the presentation was not prerecorded pursuant to Measure M.*

#### **BACKGROUND**

Every ten years, cities with by-district elections are required to use new census data to review and redraw district lines to reflect population changes. This process, called redistricting, ensures that all districts within a city have nearly an equal number of people residing within each district.

Although the City recently went through the districting process in 2018, the Council districts that were created reflected the population totals from the 2010 census. Under state law, public entities with elections in November 2022 have until April 17, 2022 in which to adopt district maps that reflect the changes in population indicated in the 2020 census (as modified by the State of California to reflect the original residency of persons incarcerated in California's prisons).

The City's redistricting process is a standalone process that is not connected to the redistricting that occurred at a state level (including for the Congressional, Assembly, and state Senate districts) or at the County level (for the Supervisorial districts). The City's process only addresses any necessary rebalancing of the Council district boundaries that will now occur once a decade after the U.S. Census is released.

Under recently adopted state laws (AB 849 and AB 1276), when the City Council goes through the redistricting process, the Council is required to draw and adopt boundaries using the following criteria in the listed order of priority:

1. Substantially equal in population for each of the districts.
2. Complies with the U.S. Constitution, the California Constitution and the federal Voting Rights Act.

3. Geographically contiguous.

4. Minimize the division of local neighborhoods and local communities of interest. (The law defines a “community of interest” as a population that shares common social or economic interests.)

5. Create district boundaries that residents can easily identify and understand. (These would include natural or artificial barriers, streets or the boundaries of the city.)

6. Districts that are compact in size.

7. District boundaries that are not adopted to favor or discriminate against a political party. (Elections Code Section 21601.)

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

1. Minimize the number of voters delayed from voting from 2022 to 2024;

2. Respect voters’ choices/continuity in office; and

3. Future population growth.

As part of the redistricting process, the City is required to hold at least four public hearings or workshops. To date, the City Council has held a total of six public hearings on redistricting, with the last public hearing held on February 1, 2022. Tonight’s public hearing is scheduled to be the seventh – and final – public hearing on redistricting.

## ANALYSIS

At the last public hearing held on February 1, 2022, the City Council considered a total of 12 maps – eight maps submitted by members of the public and four maps prepared by the City’s demographer. Of those 12 maps, the City Council narrowed its consideration to six maps that fell within two distinct categories:

1. *Three maps that make minimal changes to the existing Council District to achieve a population balance in each of the six Districts – NDC Maps 201, 203 and 203A.*

2. *Three maps that unite each inhabited neighborhood within a single Council district -- Public Maps 4, 6 and 7.*

After the February 1, 2022 City Council meeting, members of the public had until February 7, 2022 at 5 p.m. in which to submit additional maps. Three additional maps were submitted by this deadline for City Council consideration:

1. **Public Map 9.** This map is very similar to NDC Map 203A. The only substantive difference between NDC Map 203A and Public Map 9 is that the Five Points Northeast neighborhood moves from District 4 to District 6.

2. **Public Maps 10 and 11.** Although the transmittal email for these maps indicated that the maps were “loose versions” of Public Map 6, the two maps made a number of changes to Public Map 6 (i.e., these maps modify the boundaries of every District within Public Map 6 except for District 1). Public Maps 10 and 11 also both divide the Five Points Northeast neighborhood.

At tonight’s public hearing, staff recommends that the City Council take public testimony regarding the six maps that the Council selected to move forward in the review process (NDC Maps 201, 203 and 203A and Public Maps 4, 6 and 7) and the three new maps that were submitted prior to the February 7, 2022 deadline (Public Maps 9, 10 and 11). An analysis of the changes that each of the maps would make to the existing Council District map is included as an attachment to this staff report. You can also review each of these maps on the City’s website at: <https://www.oxnard.org/maps-submitted>.

After public testimony has ended, the City Council should determine if it wishes to add any of the new maps (Public Maps 9, 10 and 11) to the six maps that have already been selected to advance to the final selection process.

Once that decision has been made, the City Council should make a determination regarding which map the City Council wishes to select as the Council District map. Once the City Council has selected the Council District map, then the matter will be brought back to the City Council on March 1, 2022 for the introduction of the ordinance adopting the District map by amending Appendix A to Oxnard City Code Section 2-4.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

This agenda item does not relate to the five strategic priorities adopted by City Council on March 16, 2021.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no financial impact.

### **COMMITTEE OUTCOME**

This item did not originate in Committee.

*Prepared by: Kenneth Rozell, Chief Assistant City Attorney, Jason Zaragoza, Deputy City Attorney*

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. NDC Map 201
2. NDC Map 203
3. NDC Map 203A
4. Public Map 4
5. Public Map 6
6. Public Map 7
7. Public Map 9
8. Public Map 10
9. Public Map 11
10. Analysis of District Maps Being Considered by the City Council