



**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**777 B Street, Hayward, CA 94541**  
**Council Chambers and Zoom**  
<https://hayward.zoom.us/j/83639328548?pwd=ZUdDZE5lM2R1dHNFbVJoVXJBckdmQT09>  
**Tuesday, May 14, 2024, 5:30 p.m.**

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The Special City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Salinas at 5:30 p.m. The City Council held a hybrid meeting in the Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Council Member Bonilla Jr.

Present: COUNCIL MEMBERS Andrews, Bonilla Jr., Goldstein, Roche, Syrop, Zermeño  
MAYOR Salinas  
Absent: None

Council Member Roche arrived at 5:38 p.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Suzanne Luther, Hayward Concerned Citizens member, acknowledged National Police Week and Wednesday as Peace Officers Memorial Day; and expressed gratitude to local police officers for the work they do protecting the city.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

1. Public Hearing No. 1 to Receive Input from the Community on City Council Districts to be Established for District-Based Elections Beginning in 2026 **PH 24-021**

Staff report submitted by City Attorney Lawson, dated May 14, 2024, was filed.

Interim City Manager Claussen announced the City had initiated the process for transitioning from at-large to district-based election beginning in 2026 under the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) and introduced Jennifer Nentwig with Tripepi Smith and Karin MacDonald with Q2 Data & Research, LLC.

Jennifer Nentwig with Tripepi Smith provided an overview of the outreach conducted; outlined the outreach and engagement strategy for Hayward's districting process; and highlighted the launch of a dedicated districting website, MapHayward.org, which serves as a comprehensive resource for community members.

Karin Mac Donald with Q2 Data & Research LLC provided an overview of the CVRA and the districting process; explained the criteria and laws for creating districts, including compliance with the Federal Voting Rights Act; emphasized the importance of community input in defining communities of interest; described the structured timeline and hearings required by the CVRA;

and encouraged community participation through various tools and resources available on the dedicated website, [maphayward.org](http://maphayward.org).

Mayor Salinas opened the public hearing at 6:18 p.m.

Bilingual Hayward employees Lilia Corral, Tracey Nguyen, Lenny Estrellita Damaso, and Flora Chen made announcements offering interpretation and translation services for the meeting and future meetings in Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Chinese, respectively.

Scott Rafferty, representing the Asian-American group, emphasized the importance of considering multiple factors in community representation beyond race and ethnicity, such as socio-economic conditions, access to resources, and neighborhood characteristics; and highlighted the need for authentic input from constituents.

Chuck Purvis, downtown Hayward resident, presented a graphic by Jeanne Bertolina depicting eighteen Hayward neighborhoods as a basis for community and districting discussions; and suggested starting with these neighborhoods for a clearer and more practical approach. He also inquired if multiple submissions of maps were acceptable.

Paul Taylor, Rental Housing Association of Southern Alameda County Executive Director and Hayward Chamber of Commerce Board member, expressed concerns about rushing the districting process to meet a 2024 deadline; and suggested delaying the process until 2026 to ensure proper understanding and implementation.

Todd Falduti, Hayward Chamber of Commerce Chairman of the Board, recommended delaying the transition to district elections until 2026; argued that the complexity of transitioning from at-large to district elections requires extensive analysis, public input, demographic studies, and logistical preparations; and advocated for a careful, transparent, and inclusive process to ensure a fair and equitable district model.

Interim City Manager Claussen clarified that the transition to district-based elections in Hayward is planned for the 2026 election.

Rich Fierro, Jackson Triangle resident, expressed opposition to the transition to district-based elections; praised Hayward's history of diverse and inclusive decision-making; and argued that the stated aim of making elections easier for certain demographics is anti-democratic.

Karla Goodbody, Southgate neighborhood representative, highlighted its economic and educational ties, including proximity to Southland Mall, Chabot College, and St. Rose Hospital, along with diverse housing options and local schools; and urged the Council to keep the Southgate community intact despite Highway 92's division to maintain its social and economic continuity and foster continued community growth.

Dave Robinson proposed adopting proportional ranked choice voting (RCV) as an alternative to transitioning to district elections, allowing voters to self-district and potentially benefiting minority groups without needing specific district lines; suggested that RCV could be implemented by November 2024 through a friendly court order; and raised concerns about



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whether the City's charter, which includes the mayor as an at-large council member, requires an amendment to fully transition to district-based elections.

TJ, Hayward Concerned Citizens member, expressed relief that the transition to district elections has been delayed until 2026, emphasizing the need for comprehensive outreach; and noted the complexity of the process and the general lack of awareness among the community, suggesting town halls and face-to-face discussions as effective ways to inform and engage residents.

Mayor Salinas noted the City Clerk had been informed that Scott Rafferty had an additional 12 minutes to address the Council.

Scott Rafferty acknowledged the importance of community engagement and transparency in the districting process; emphasized the significance of creating a majority Asian-American district based on new census data, as it holds legal and representation importance; argued district-based elections would enhance minority representation and voter turnout without being divisive; and urged the City to make the process inclusive and educational for all residents.

Mayor Salinas closed the public hearing at 6:55 p.m.

In response to Council Member Zermeño's inquiry about the decision-making process for the expected map submissions and potential lawsuits from unrepresented ethnic groups, Karin MacDonald explained the submitted maps would be synthesized, and options presented to the Council and emphasized the importance of targeted outreach to minority communities.

In response to Council Member Zermeño's inquiry about upcoming hearings, Interim City Manager Claussen confirmed the four hearings, with the final decision expected in the fall, all in preparation for the 2026 elections.

In response to Council Member Syrop's inquiry about adding state and federal laws applicable to district elections and the process for submitting and updating maps, Karin Mac Donald confirmed the information will be added to the website and noted there were no restrictions regarding multiple map submissions.

In response to Council Member Roche's inquiry about additional town halls or community meetings in different settings to gather more input, Interim City Manager Claussen responded the City plans to conduct extensive outreach to involve as much of the community as possible.

Council Member Roche expressed support for the districting process under the CVRA and hoped it would enhance representation for the Asian community; criticized Scott Rafferty's comments, feeling they were divisive and did not accurately reflect Hayward's situation, where the current Council mirrors the city's demographics; and emphasized that members of the

Council are deeply connected to the community and found Rafferty's generalized state-level arguments inappropriate.

Council Member Bonilla Jr. echoed Council Member Roche's sentiments; emphasized the importance of holding meetings within the community to gather broad input; and highlighted the need for a thoughtful, community-led, and well-informed process, supported by the 2026 implementation timeline, to ensure the maps are representative and align with the community's values.

Council Member Andrews emphasized the necessity of the districting transition for legal compliance and the City's protection; acknowledged specific individuals for their comments and contributions; supported holding town halls in various community locations; and concurred with comments made by Council Member Roche.

Council Member Goldstein emphasized the importance of community engagement and transparency in the districting process, urging residents to participate and involve their neighbors; acknowledged the City's strong history of diverse representation; and highlighted the need for communities of interest to identify themselves and participate in the process, and stressed the importance of mentoring new representatives to ensure effective governance.

Council Member Zermeño emphasized Hayward's exemplary diversity and noted his own distinction as the first Mexican-born immigrant elected at large in the City; and highlighted the election of the first Latino mayor at large, asserting that the last public speaker's comments demonstrated a lack of understanding of Hayward's achievements in representation.

Mayor Salinas provided a historical overview of Voting Rights Acts, highlighting their origins in combating gerrymandering and promoting representation for communities marginalized such as that by Jim Crow laws; expressed concerns about the current process being driven by attorneys profiting from lawsuits to force districting; emphasized his deep personal connection to Hayward, having lived in various neighborhoods and engaged extensively with the community; found the suggestion that council members would learn more about their City through the districting process offensive, given their long-term involvement and familiarity with Hayward; and concluded by expressing his commitment to proceeding with the districting process.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Salinas adjourned the special City Council meeting at 7:27 p.m.

## **APPROVED**

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Mark Salinas  
Mayor, City of Hayward



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**ATTEST:**

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Miriam Lens  
City Clerk, City of Hayward