



SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
777 B Street, Hayward, CA 94541
Council Chambers and Zoom
<https://hayward.zoom.us/j/83639328548?pwd=ZUdDZE5lM2R1dHNFbVJoVXJBckdmQT09>
Tuesday, May 28, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

The Special City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Salinas at 6:00 p.m. The City Council held a hybrid meeting in the Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance: Council Member Roche

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There being no public comment, Mayor Salinas opened and closed the public comment session at 6:01 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public Hearing No. 2 to Receive Input from the Community on City Council Districts to be Established for District-Based Elections Beginning in 2026 (Report from City Attorney Lawson) **PH 24-022**

Staff report submitted by City Attorney Lawson, dated May 28, 2024, was filed.

Interim City Manager Clausen announced the item and introduced Karin Mac Donald with Q2 Data & Research, LLC and Jennifer Nentwig with Tripepi Smith.

Karin Mac Donald explained the districting process and timeline; outlined the districting criteria, including equal population, compliance with the Federal Voting Rights Act, contiguity, respect for communities of interest, and compactness; emphasized the importance of community involvement, encouraging public participation in defining and documenting communities of interest through various tools and resources available on the website (maphayward.org); and detailed the timeline for public hearings and workshops, extending from May to October, and provided instructions on submitting community information and district maps.

Jennifer Nentwig provided an update on the outreach and engagement efforts regarding the districting process including a City-wide mailer sent to 63,454 addresses; information on the website (maphayward.org) garnering over 2,400 page views; news releases and an article in the Stack; social media posts achieving over 8,300 impressions; and efforts to engage community-based organizations have also been ramped up, with outreach to over 200 groups.

Mayor Salinas opened the public hearing at 6:31 p.m.

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

Elena Lepe, El Puente Comunitario representative, expressed support for districting efforts; and urged for more inclusion and collective efforts to impact schools and meet community needs.

Theresa Rezendes displayed news articles discussing a recent ruling by the California Supreme Court on election systems; highlighted opinions suggesting that alternative systems such as proportional representation using ranked-choice voting could better serve minority representation; and emphasized the ongoing debate over the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA).

Paul Taylor, Rental Housing Association Executive Director and Hayward Chamber of Commerce Board member, expressed the Chamber's support for the City's initiatives and addressed misconceptions about Hayward being the only city with at-large elections.

Peggy Guernsey expressed her preference for at-large voting; and raised concerns about district-based voting leading to less community cohesion and fairness, questioning how different City, HUSD and HARD districts would function together.

Chuck Purvis praised the web-based mapping tool provided for districting, suggesting a short instructional video to improve usability; displayed largest racial group by block maps; highlighted the need for additional demographic materials to assist residents in understanding City characteristics; and recommended using interstates and railroads as natural boundaries for districting.

David Robinson commended the user-friendly mapping tools; presented his own draft maps for districting; proposed using major roads and train tracks as boundaries, emphasizing compact and contiguous districts; and highlighted Hayward's diversity and the challenges in defining communities of interest, advocating for community input to refine the maps and ensure balanced representation.

Scott Rafferty, representing the Asian-American group, provided information focused on defining communities of interest to help create fair district maps; suggested using neighborhood plans, GIS sources, socio-economic variables, and historical communities to identify areas that need better representation; emphasized the importance of considering factors such as income, citizenship, education levels, renter populations, public safety concerns, protected groups; and highlighted the need for public input in the process to ensure that districts reflect the diverse needs of the community.

Mayor Salinas closed the public hearing at 7:14 p.m.



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Members of the City Council thanked community members who provided input in person as well as in writing, as well as City staff and consultants.

Council Member Andrews suggested working with the Hayward Chamber of Commerce to update the list of businesses and reaching out to the Downtown Hayward Improvement Association, churches, swim clubs, and homeowners association (HOA) to ensure the outreach list is comprehensive.

Council Member Syrop emphasized the need to clearly communicate the population requirements for district maps and suggested incorporating demographic and socioeconomic data to assist the public in creating accurate maps; raised concerns about accessibility of submitted maps and suggested ensuring zip files are expanded for public viewing; recommended that community service organizations be included in the outreach process; and highlighted the financial implications of not complying with the districting process, referencing costly lawsuits in other cities.

Council Member Zermeno acknowledged the frustration expressed by public members but emphasized the necessity of embracing the districting process; stressed the importance of community engagement; and reaffirmed his accountability to all 160,000 residents of Hayward.

In response to Council Member Roche's inquiry about the process for reviewing and narrowing down community-submitted district maps, Karin Mac Donald responded that the legal team would facilitate an evolving process where maps and community of interest input would be reviewed, and the Council could incorporate elements from various submissions. Council Member Roche suggested creating a quick tutorial for the online mapping tool to assist the public; and highlighted the potential for more choice representation within communities through district-based elections.

Council Member Bonilla Jr. acknowledged the significance of this undertaking and the importance of being thoughtful and deliberate in drawing district maps; and encouraged continued community engagement and participation, emphasizing that this process is a collective effort to ensure fair and equitable representation.

Council Member Goldstein emphasized the importance of community involvement and mentorship in the governance process, encouraging residents to participate in drawing district maps and commission service; and stressed that governing effectively requires learning and experience. In response to Council Member Goldstein's inquiry, City Attorney Lawson noted that ranked-choice voting was not an option in the process the City was embarking on but would consult with the legal team to what extent ranked-choice voting might impact districting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Salinas adjourned the City Council meeting at 7:31 p.m.

APPROVED

Mark Salinas
Mayor, City of Hayward

ATTEST:

Miriam Lens
City Clerk, City of Hayward