



SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
777 B Street, Hayward, CA 94541
Council Chambers and Zoom

<https://hayward.zoom.us/j/83639328548?pwd=ZUdDZE5lM2R1dHNFbVJoVXJBckdmQT09>
Tuesday, October 1, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

The Special City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Salinas at 5:35 p.m. The City Council held a hybrid meeting in the Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance: Council Member Roche

ROLL CALL

Present: COUNCIL MEMBERS Andrews, Bonilla Jr., Goldstein, Roche, Syrop, Zermeño
MAYOR Salinas

Absent: NONE

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Salinas took the Mayor's privilege and allowed Mr. Moody to make a comment on a non-agenda related item.

East Palo Alto former Mayor Moody, representing Glad Tidings International Church, thanked the Council and other officials for their support during the September opening of the Glad Tidings Church Wellness Center, named after late NFL Player Chester McGlockton; and invited all to visit the center and learn about its initiatives.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public Hearing No. 5 to Select the Final Map Identifying District Boundaries, Provide Direction on the Sequence of District Elections Beginning in 2026, and Introduce an Ordinance to Amend the Hayward Municipal Code to Add Chapter Article 16 to Chapter 2, Establishing District-Based City Council Elections Beginning in 2026 **PH 24-044**

Staff report submitted by City Attorney Lawson, dated October 1, 2024, was filed.

Interim City Manager Claussen announced the item and introduced Demographer Karin Mac Donald with Q2 Data & Research, LLC, who provided an overview of the finalist district map, explaining its compliance with districting criteria and public input, along with the process of assigning district numbers. Below is a summary of the districts:

District 1 (formerly District F) is bounded by Mission Boulevard to the creek south of Harder Road. It includes the Hayward Hills and the Cal State University East Bay Community of Interests (COIs), the Mission Foothill and Upper B Street neighborhoods and the Prospect/Hazel COIs.

District 2 (formerly District C) contains the neighborhoods of Burbank and Jackson Triangle, with west North Hayward and downtown, and a small part of Santa Clara Street.

District 3 (formerly District B) contains the Longwood/Winton Grove neighborhood, Southgate neighborhood, most of the Santa Clara neighborhood, and the western portion of the Harder/Tennyson neighborhood.

District 4 (formerly District A) combines the Mt. Eden and Glen Eden neighborhoods.

District 5 (formerly District D) combines the Whitman/Mocine neighborhood, the eastern portion of the Tennyson/Alquire neighborhood, the eastern portion of the Harder/Tennyson neighborhood, and northern portion of the Mission/Garin neighborhood.

District 6 (formerly District E) combines the Fairway Park neighborhood with the eastern portion of the Tennyson/Alquire neighborhood and southern portion of Mission/Garin.

Karin Mac Donald also discussed the election sequencing, which will determine which districts elect council members in 2026 and 2028.

Mayor Salinas opened the public hearing at 5:53 p.m.

Collin Thormoto, homeowner in Hayward's upcoming District 2, expressed gratitude for the Council's efforts in the districting process and proposed changes to the election cycle, suggesting electing three council members per cycle and aligning the mayor's election with presidential years to boost voter turnout; recommended extending the residency requirement for Council candidates; and asked about plans for adjusting districts after future censuses, encouraging more community involvement in that process.

Scott Rafferty commended the Council for adopting a district map that effectively represents all communities, especially addressing the long-term underrepresentation of Asians; praised the map's alignment with various districts and its cohesion across socioeconomic variables, emphasizing its potential to improve representation and voter turnout in minority communities; and stressed the importance of neighborhood elections and suggested sequencing high-minority districts during presidential elections to maximize participation.

Dave Robinson advocated for filling open-seat districts in 2026 to enhance geographic representation and having a mayoral election in 2026; recommended amending the City Charter in 2026 to make it consistent with districts; raised the possibility of future discussions on ranked choice voting; and proposed a map adjustment in Districts B and C to improve population balance and community cohesion in certain areas.

Dwight Turner expressed concerns about District 1's (formerly District F) sprawling boundaries, particularly regarding fire safety and access issues in his area; and highlighted the difficulty of managing such a diverse district and emphasized the need for common interests, such as fire danger, to be prioritized in the map drawing process.



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Rich Fierro sought clarity on whether the current Council members would face re-election in two or four years; and emphasized the importance of considering the current members' situation when deciding sequencing and asked if more public meetings would be held on the topic.

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

Council Member Bonilla Jr. expressed support for the finalized district map, noting that it effectively balances population size and represents neighborhoods and communities of interest; acknowledged District 1's unique shape and supported its inclusion in the 2026 election cycle due to its large size; emphasized the importance of American and Pacific Islanders) AAPI representation on the dais, highlighting District 4's large AAPI population and recommending it be reserved for the 2028 election for higher voter turnout during presidential election cycles; and proposed that District 6, another AAPI plurality district, be included in the 2026 election.

Council Member Bonilla Jr. made a motion to move finalization of the maps as presented; and recommended that Districts 1 and 6 be included in the 2026 election and Districts 2 through 5 go in the 2028 election, noting this action would consider the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) and residents' input received in writing and verbally.

Council Member Zermeño seconded the motion; and voiced concern that the districting process seemed to focus on Asian representation, questioning the inclusion of Latino representation in the map.

Council Member Roche acknowledging that although the districting timeline was constrained due to a legal settlement, community input was still significant; expressed hope that the new districts will encourage more members of the Asian and other minority communities to run for office and foster greater public engagement; praised the fairness of the maps and emphasized that the process focused on the future of the City rather than individual interests; and noted that while some districts will be phased in gradually, there will still be at-large representation until full district representation is established by 2028.

In response to Council Member Syrop's inquiry on whether the City Charter needed to be amended to reflect the transition to at-large elections and the one-year residency requirement (Section 601), City Attorney Lawson indicated an amendment was unnecessary indicating the language inconsistency was allowed under State law for the purpose of CVRA, and added the one-year residency requirement was not enforceable due to case law.

Council Member Syrop expressed support for the finalized map, noting his comfort with how it reflects neighborhood boundaries and his approval of the proposed sequencing plan for elections, with Districts 1 and 6 going first in 2026 and Districts 2 through 5 in 2028; addressed the shapes of the districts noting they represent the legal boundaries of Hayward

and inclusive of the neighborhoods within them; and acknowledged the community's input through the districting process.

Council Member Goldstein praised the diligence brought to the mapping process, noting that feedback from the community also reflected a high level of trust in districting efforts. However, he expressed concerns with the motion, pointing out that some districts currently lack representation, including District 1, and sought clarification on whether certain districts, such as those with significant Asian populations, should be prioritized in presidential election years to ensure better representation.

Council Member Bonilla Jr. clarified his motion, explaining that District 4, which has the largest AAPI demographic, should be scheduled for a presidential election year (2028) to benefit from higher voter turnout, and recommended District 6, with the second-highest AAPI population, be included in the 2026 election to provide an earlier opportunity for AAPI representation.

Council Member Andrews expressed gratitude to staff for their efforts in engaging the community throughout the districting process, highlighting the use of social media and presence at events; emphasized the importance of ensuring that the entire Council remains representative of the whole community, not just individual districts; acknowledged the current Council's diversity of thought as well as composition; reassured the community that they hold the power to hold elected officials accountable; and expressed support for the motion, reaffirming that Council members serve the entire community, regardless of district boundaries.

In response to Council Member Syrop's inquiry as to the next districting process, City Attorney Lawson indicated the districting process would be revisited in 2032 after the 2031 census data becomes available.

Council Member Roche reinforced that Council members elected in November 2024 will continue to serve the entire City at large, ensuring no gaps in representation, regardless of where they reside.

City Attorney Lawson noted that the sequencing recommendation offered in the motion, would align with CVRA and California Fair Map Act requirements, and would be consistent with public input. Outside Counsel Robin Johansen added that both sequencing options would work legally and stressed the importance of prioritizing community representation over incumbency concerns.

Mayor Salinas expressed gratitude to Karin Mac Donald and her team for their work on the districting process and praised the community engagement that shaped the final map and sequencing; acknowledged the commitment of his fellow Council members, commending their dedication and public service; highlighted the representation of Asian Americans on the Hayward City Council since 2006 and emphasized the City Council diversity in the Bay Area; affirmed that Council members represent the entire city, not just their districts; and expressed hope for increased voter participation in future elections.



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It was moved by Council Member Bonilla Jr., seconded by Council Member Zermeño to select the Modified Finalist Map 1 establishing the boundaries of six voting districts; select District 1 and 6 for the 2026 election and Districts 2 through 5 for the 2028 election; and introduce the ordinance that will transition the City's election system from an at-large system to a district-based system beginning in 2026.

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS Andrews, Bonilla Jr., Goldstein, Roche, Syrop, Zermeño
MAYOR Salinas

NOES: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

Introduction of Ordinance 24-_, "An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Hayward Adding Article 16 to Chapter 2 of the Hayward Municipal Code, Establishing District-Based City Council Elections; and Finding that the Action is Exempt from CEQA Review"

COUNCIL REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council Member Andrews acknowledged Dwight Turner for his long-standing service as a member of the Keep Hayward Clean and Green Task Force and thanked him for participating in the meeting and speaking on the evening's topic.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Salinas adjourned the special meeting to a City Council Closed Session at 6:55 p.m.

APPROVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Salinas", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Salinas
Mayor, City of Hayward

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Miriam Lens", written over a horizontal line.

Miriam Lens
City Clerk, City of Hayward