



COUNCIL REDISTRICTING COMMISSION PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING

August 12, 2021

The Council Redistricting Commission Public Outreach Meeting of the City of Mesa met at the Webster Recreation Center, 202 N. Sycamore, Mesa, Arizona on August 12, 2021, at 6:10 p.m.

COMMISSION PRESENT	COMMISSION ABSENT	COUNCIL PRESENT	STAFF PRESENT
Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo, Chairperson Elaine Miner Catherine Jiang Greg Marek Jo Martin	None	Francisco Heredia	Lucy Hambright Dee Ann Mickelsen Jeff Robbins

1. Welcome announcements.

Chairperson Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized District 3 Councilmember Heredia. She explained the purpose of redistricting and introduced commission members.

Chairperson Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo explained that the City is working with an accelerated timeline to obtain feedback and identify “Communities of Interest.” She added that even though the census data is available, there is still some work to be done to make the data usable.

She briefly outlined the parameters for determining district boundaries as follows:

- Explained community mapping activity placemats
- Charter requirements of incumbent districts and redistricting guidelines

2. Hear a presentation on redistricting principles, communities of interest, and redistricting mapping tools.

Sophia Garcia, Redistricting Partners GIS & Outreach Director, introduced Kimi Shigetani, Chief Administrative Officer with Redistricting Partners. Ms. Garcia presented the 2021 Redistricting Community Outreach presentation. **(See Attachment 1)**

Ms. Garcia highlighted the redistricting process and noted that district lines are adjusted every 10 years after the release of the U.S. decennial census to ensure City Council districts are rebalanced. She added that beyond creating districts of equal population, redistricting also serves to empower local communities and maintain communities of interest.

Ms. Garcia briefly outlined some of the proposed topics to be covered as follows:

- Redistricting Basics
- Redistricting Commission
- Traditional Redistricting Principles
- Communities of Interest
- Map Tool Demonstration
- Public Testimony on Communities of Interest
- Public Hearing Schedule and Timeline

Ms. Garcia highlighted the traditional redistricting principles that prevent gerrymandering, which includes:

- Relatively equal size by population
- Contiguous – districts should not hop/jump
- Maintain “communities of interest”
- Follow city/county/local government lines
- Keep districts compact in appearance and function

Ms. Garcia highlighted communities of interest, which are the building blocks of districts and is high-ranking criteria that brings people together for representation. She noted that communities of interest include ethnic and language minorities and other groups covered by the Voting Rights Act. She said that while race is a community of interest, it cannot be the predominant factor in drawing district boundaries and highlighted examples of communities of interest. (See Pages 14 through 21 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Garcia invited citizens to draw their own maps, available at each table or by using the online mapping tool, which will be analyzed later by Redistricting Partners.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo thanked Ms. Garcia for the presentation.

3. Receive public comment, questions, and answers with the public.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo responded to questions and comments from the public regarding drawing lines in relation to high school boundaries, communities of interest, mid-point census data, and previous redistricting highlights.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo thanked the citizens for their participation and encouraged them leave feedback and utilizing the online mapping tools.

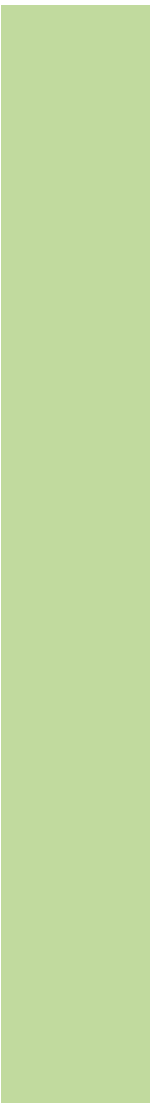
4. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Council Redistricting Commission Public Outreach meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Council Redistricting Commission Public Outreach Meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 12th day of August 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

abg
(Attachments – 1)



City of Mesa
2021 Redistricting
Community Outreach Hearing





Welcome



Agenda

Things we will cover:

- Redistricting Basics
- Redistricting Commission
- Traditional Redistricting Principles
- Communities of Interest
- Map Tool Demonstration
- Public Testimony on Communities of Interest
- Public Hearing Schedule

What is Redistricting

Definition

Redistricting is the process of adjusting district lines every 10 years after the release of the U.S. Census. The well-known examples are Congressional and State Legislative Districts, but local governments also must do redistricting.

- The City of Mesa also must go through this process, as it did in 2011, to ensure the city council districts are rebalanced after the decennial census.
- Beyond creating districts of equal population, redistricting also serves to empower local communities.

Redistricting Commission

Structure

As required by the City Charter, the City Council appointed a 5-member nonpartisan redistricting commission to conduct community outreach and present maps for the Council's approval. The goals of commission are:

- Conduct community outreach hearings
- Identify communities of interest from public input
- Rebalance city council districts using qualitative and quantitative data
- Present maps to the Council



Redistricting Commission

Structure

Charter Language:

The initial district boundaries and all subsequent redistricting shall be established by a five-person nonpartisan Commission appointed by the City Council.

Amd. Charter Election 5-19-98

Appointment. The Mayor shall appoint all board and commission members with the approval of the Council. Appointees shall be residents of the City. (Amd. Charter Election 3-29-94)

Commissioners

The five-member Commission is appointed by City Council

- Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo (*Chair*)
- Elaine Miner (*Vice Chair*)
- Catherine Jiang
- Greg Marek
- Jo Martin

Board Final Decision/Map Approval

Definition

Charter Language:

The redrawing of district boundaries shall not remove the residence of an incumbent Councilmember from the district he was elected to represent during his term in that office.

The City Council shall approve the Commission's recommendations or if disapproved, send recommendations back to the Commission for reconsideration: the second recommendation from the Commission shall then be deemed final.

Amd. Charter Election 5-19-98



Timeline

April 29, 2021
Redistricting Commission
appointed by City Council

August 2021
Federal Government
delivers U.S. Census Data

August 2021
Redistricting Commission
begins hosting public
hearings

November 15, 2021
Deadline for City
Council to pass final
district plan

Traditional Redistricting Principles

Preventing a Districting from becoming a Gerrymander

There are a number of criteria that have been used nationally and upheld by courts.

- Relatively equal size - people,
- Contiguous – districts should not hop/jump
- Maintain “*communities of interest*”
- Follow city/county/local government lines
- Keep districts compact – appearance/function

Traditional Redistricting Principles

Drawing New City Council Lines for Fair Representation

There are a number of criteria that have been used nationally and upheld by courts.

- Relatively equal size - people
- Contiguous – districts should not hop/jump
- **Maintain “communities of interest”**
- Follow city/county/local government lines
- Keep districts compact – appearance/function

Communities of Interest

Bringing like people together for representation

Communities of interest are the building blocks of districts.

A community of interest includes ethnic and language minorities and other groups.

- Subjective
- Open-ended to be as inclusive as possible

Communities covered by the Voting Rights Act

- Latinos
- Asians
- African Americans
- Native Americans

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While race is a community of interest, it cannot be the *predominant factor* in drawing district boundaries.

Communities of Interest

Bringing like people together for representation

- Historical communities
- Economic interests
- Racial composition
- Ethnic Areas
- Cultural amenities
- Religious facilities
- Immigrant communities
- Languages spoken
- Geographic features
- Neighborhoods
- Economic opportunity zones
- Tourism Areas
- School districts
- Outdoor recreation areas
- Communities defined by natural resource features
- Downtown / Urban
- Rural or Agricultural
- Homeowner or Renters
- Creative arts communities
- Media markets
- *Many, many more*

Communities of Interest

Three Critical Questions in Defining for Redistricting

- Does the community have a shared culture, characteristics or bond?
- Is the community geographic in nature? Is the community able to be mapped?
- How would you describe the community's relationship with the City of Mesa and how it is affected by the policy decisions made by the elected officials?

Is this a Community of Interest?

A group of renters who live downtown testifies to the city's redistricting commission.

Would this be considered a *Community of Interest*?

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A group of renters who live downtown testifies to the city's redistricting commission.

Would this be considered a Community of Interest?

YES! This group of residents can easily to be mapped in a distinct area AND they share a common policy interest, which can be addressed through legislation or public services.

Is this a Community of Interest?

A historically-recognized town dating back to the late 1800s but now has a minimal population is within the lines of a county.

Should the city's redistricting commission prioritize this historical town when drawing their maps?

Is this a Community of Interest?

A historically-recognized town dating back to the late 1800s but now has a minimal population is within the lines of the city.

Should the city's redistricting commission prioritize this historical town when drawing their maps?

YES! Historical communities are recognized as a community of interest and should be considered when drawing maps.



Is this a Community of Interest?

A statewide group for people who are fans of the Arizona Diamondbacks testifies to the local city redistricting commission.

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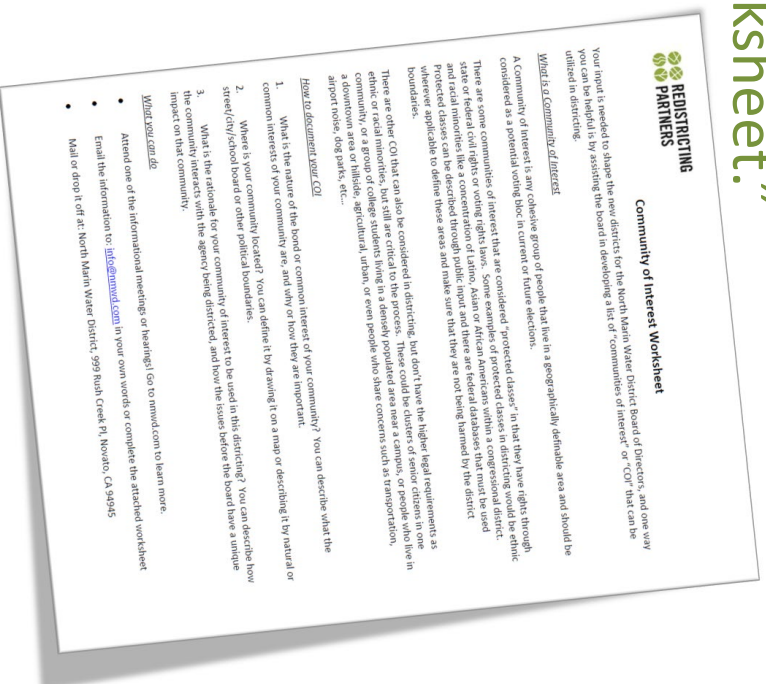
NO! It is important that a community of interest is distinct enough to draw on a map. This group overlaps throughout the entire state, and it is unlikely that a governing agency has any say over these issues.



Community of Interest Forms

Submitting Your COI Form

- Input can be provided in public hearings or using our “Community of Interest Worksheet.”



Communities of Interest

Drawing YOUR Communities of Interest

The City of Mesa will be using DistrictR as a public mapping tool to allow residents to draw their own Communities of Interest.



You draw the lines.

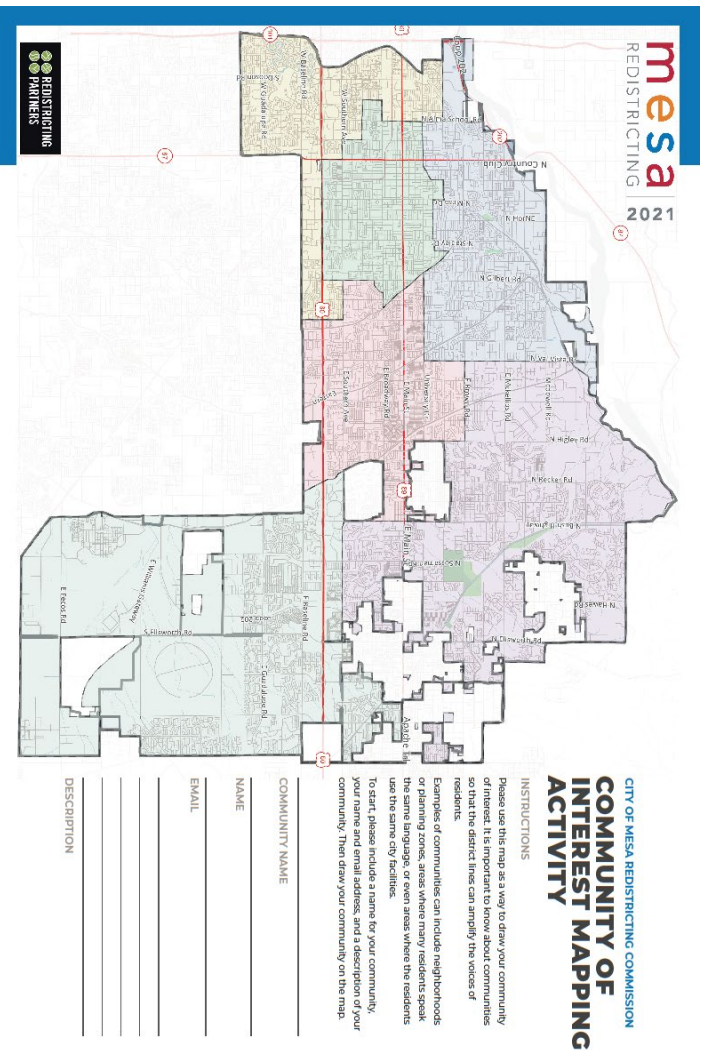
<https://districtr.org/tag/mesaaz>



Communities of Interest

Drawing YOUR Communities of Interest

The City of Mesa has created placemats for the public to use to draw their own community of interest.

The placemat features a map of Mesa, Arizona, with various colored overlays representing different communities of interest. The map is titled "mesa 2021 REDISTRICTING" in the top left corner. Below the map, there are instructions and a form for drawing a community of interest.

CITY OF MESA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

COMMUNITY OF INTEREST MAPPING ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS

Please use this map as a way to draw your community of interest. It is important to know about communities so that the district lines can amplify the voices of residents.

Examples of communities can include neighborhoods or planning zones, areas where many residents speak the same language, or even areas where the residents use the same city facilities.


To start, please include a name for your community, your name and email address, and a description of your community. Then draw your community on the map.

COMMUNITY NAME _____

NAME _____

EMAIL _____

DESCRIPTION _____





City of Mesa Redistricting Advisory Commission

Timeline for Upcoming Outreach Meetings

- August 12th Community Outreach Meeting
6 PM at Webster Recreation Center (202 N. Sycamore)
- August 14th Community Outreach Meeting
10 AM at Fire Station 218 Community Room (845 N. Alma School Rd.)
- August 17th Community Outreach Meeting
6 PM at Eagles Community Center (828 E. Broadway Rd.)
- August 18th Community Outreach Meeting
12 PM at Red Mountain Library (635 N. Power Rd.)
- August 25th Community Outreach Meeting
6 PM at Virtual Zoom Meeting
- August 26th Community Outreach Meeting
6 PM at Cadence Community Room (9760 E. Cadence Pkwy.)
- August 28th Community Outreach Meeting
10 AM at Madison Elementary (849 S. Sunnysvale)



City of Mesa Redistricting Website

<https://www.mesaaz.gov/government/redistricting>



REDISRICTING PARTNERS