

COUNCIL REDISTRICTING COMMISSION MINUTES

June 23, 2021

The Council Redistricting Commission of the City of Mesa met in the lower-level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on June 23, 2021 at 10:02 a.m.

COMMISSION PRESENT

Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo,
Chairperson
Elaine Miner, Vice Chair
Catherine Jiang
Greg Marek
Jo Martin

COUNCIL PRESENT

STAFF PRESENT

Dee Ann Mickelsen
Sarah Staudinger
Jeff Robbins

1. Call meeting to order.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo conducted a roll call.

2. Approval of minutes of previous meetings.

No formal action taken by the committee. Item will be continued to a future date.

3. Hear a presentation, discuss, and take action on the processes, procedures, and strategies of outreach meetings.

Sophia Garcia, Redistricting Partners GIS & Outreach Director, presented a sample of the 2021 Redistricting Community Outreach presentation that will be used at each outreach meeting. **(See Attachment 1)**

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

- What is Redistricting?
- Establishment of the Commission and Commissioner Appointments
- Charter Language/Map Approval
- Traditional Redistricting Principles
- Communities of Interest (COI)

- Map Submissions
- Timeline of Community Hearings

Discussion ensued related to the community outreach hearing presentation and content marketing. Consensus of the committee was to fine tune the following categories before public presentations; contiguous districts, school boundaries, and using other examples of communities of interest.

In response to a question from Commission Member Jiang about the American Community Survey (ACS) data, Mr. Paul Mitchell, owner of Redistricting Partners stated the ACS data is a product of the US Census. He noted the data includes, for example, where renters and homeowners live, and the composition of the district in terms of its Native American or Latino population. He indicated that all those characteristics of the areas will be defined by using the American Community Survey because it is an in-depth survey. He commented the latest decennial census should be released by August or September 2021. He added that essentially there are two different datasets used during redistricting, which are both released by the census bureau.

Commission Member Miner announced that Mesa Public Schools are willing to help getting the word out just as they did during the census.

Economic Development Project Manager Jeffrey Robbins thanked Commission Member Miner for coordinating the partnership, which has resulted in booking two locations.

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

3. Hear a presentation and discuss tools and strategies for district mapping, including the DistrictR online mapping tool.

Sophia Garcia, Redistricting Partners GIS & Outreach Director, presented the DistrictR online mapping, which allow citizens to identify the boundaries of their communities and share their communities of interest. (See Page 15 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Garcia illustrated various features of the navigation mapping tool for the public to participate online and submit their community district plans and community of interest information. Ms. Garcia stated a distinct URL code will be created to share and receive feedback. She added the DistrictR mapping tool will be promoted at each community hearing and the virtual hearing as well as using other citizen forms and placemats at the in-person meetings.

Economic Development Project Manager Jeffrey Robbins informed the Commission that other features will be added when the Census data is received.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo commented that the tool is simple to map out and expressed appreciation for the ability to pin a place on the maps since people often congregate or consider their community based on a specific spot on the map.

In response to questions about the mapping tool and the collection of data and security, Mr. Robbins stated there is a fine balance between restricting a site and making it accessible, which staff discovered when using a similar online tool for Imagine Mesa. He explained the

Commission may receive maps from the public but there are no obligations in using them, especially if they are not aligned with the data.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo advised that the DistrictR mapping tool will allow the Commission to receive feedback in order to adjust the map in a way that respects the communities as much as possible.

In response to a question from Commission Member Martin regarding sharing the DistrictR mapping URL code, Ms. Garcia responded that anyone who wants to support a specific map can share the map's URL code. She added that citizens can add their names; call into the meetings and give the name of that specific map and say I support this map; citizens can also contact the consultant and request a different map.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo thanked staff and Redistricting Partners for the presentation.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo declared a recess at 11:07 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 11:12 a.m.

4. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

5. Discuss calendaring topics and strategy for future commission and outreach meetings.

No formal action taken by the committee. Item will be continued to a future date.

6. Scheduling of future meetings.

Chairperson Villanueva-Saucedo discussed the draft redistricting process timeline. **(See Attachment 2)**

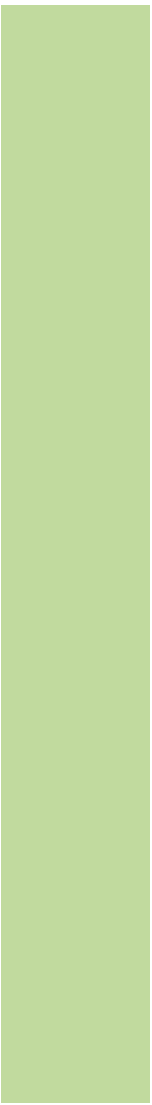
Discussion ensued with regards to making draft maps available at the community meetings and how they might change as the Commission receives feedback.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Council Redistricting Commission adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Council Redistricting Commission of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 23rd day of June 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK



City of Mesa
2021 Redistricting
Community Outreach Hearing





Redistricting Partners

About Us

Redistricting Partners is a consulting firm working with local governments to ensure a public and transparent redistricting process consistent with state, federal and local laws, and consistent with the need for public engagement.

We work with local agencies on the technical aspects of redistricting and assist in the development of redistricting plans, outreach, public engagement, analysis and other aspects of this decennial process.

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.

Establishment of the Commission

Definition

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

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

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

- Communities covered by the Voting Rights Act
 - Latinos
 - Asians
 - African Americans
 - Native Americans

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

Other examples of Communities of Interest are:

- Neighborhoods
- Your high school and junior high areas
- Senior citizens or student populations
- Downtown / urban
- Rural or agricultural
- Homeowners or renters

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?
- Describe the community's relationship with the City of Mesa and how it is affected by the policy decisions made by the elected officials.

Communities of Interest

Examples of Community of Interest testimony



Communities of Interest

Examples of Community of Interest testimony



Map Submissions

Online Map Submissions will be available in the coming month after the city completes development / hosting of the Online Redistricting software

Two types of expected input:

- Community of Interest Maps (June – End of Process)
- District Plans Based on 2020 Data (Release of Data – Final Adoption)

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>



Community of Interest Forms

Submitting Your COI Form

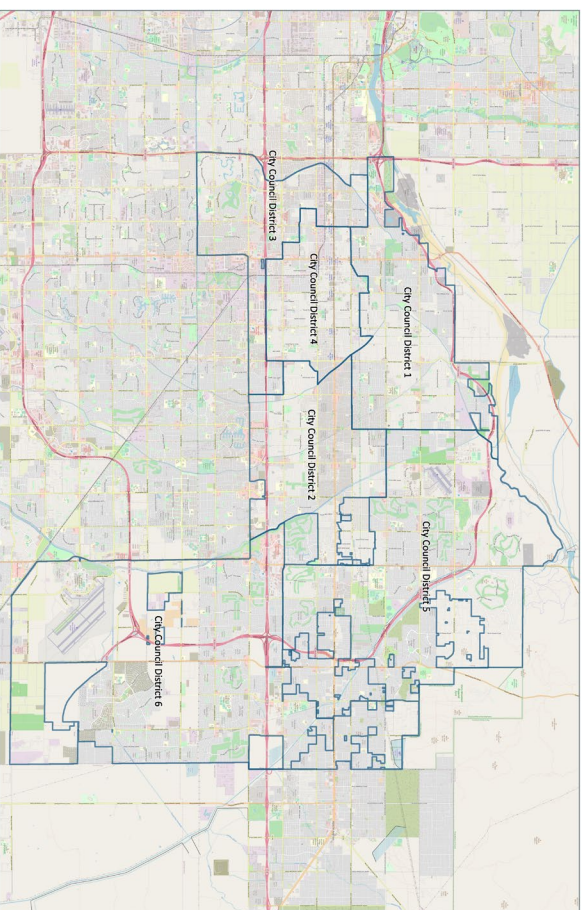
- Input can be provided in public hearings or using our “Community of Interest Worksheet.”
- This can be provided on the website as a part of overall community engagement strategy.
- Some agencies convert these to a webform or survey instrument.



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.



Timeline of Community Hearings

Upcoming Hearings

- August 12th @ 6 pm
- August 14th @ 10 am
- August 17th @ 6 pm
- August 18th @ 12 pm
- August 25th @ 6 pm --- Virtual Hearing
- August 26th @ 6 pm
- August 28th @ 10 am



REDISRICTING PARTNERS

City of Mesa Redistricting Process - *Draft Timeline*

February 2021	Kickoff meeting with City of Mesa staff (online)
May 2021	Commission seated, Initial Presentation with the Commission Chair. Website/Public Mapping Options Launched Commission begins training (see training outline below) Public Outreach to publicize process and initial meeting dates publicized
June 2021	Public Outreach Meeting with Commission – DistrictR posted on City website as an opportunity for public to submit community of interest testimony.
July 2021	Update elected officials on public meeting dates and expectations for public outreach. Provide electeds with organic social content. Commission meetings (TBD by Commission) Public information campaign begins
August 2021	Six in-person District-based Outreach Meetings and one virtual city-wide meeting Opportunity for pre-map public input on communities of interest, with specific applicability to each district and its unique needs.
Post-Census Data Map Draw September 2021	September 1-12 -Solicit publicly drawn boundaries using new Census data via DistrictR. Commission members review COI public testimony and census data results individually. Census data delivered to City Council with explainer. Week of 13 th - Meeting with Commission to review three draft maps drawn by Redistricting Partners with COI and public testimony in mind. <i>(This meeting can be public and public comment can be taken on the maps during the meeting, or the Commission can meet and review the maps. The goal of the meeting is to provide input on the draft maps in order to submit to council after second meeting. This meeting could also be done as a live line drawing meeting where the Commission works with our line drawer to develop three draft maps during the meeting, taking into account public testimony and COI input.)</i> After the meeting, the three draft maps (or fewer) is/are walked to the City Council members. City Council is asked for feedback and to identify any concerns for the Commission. Week of 20 th - Rest week Week of 27 th - Commission working meeting to revise and refine district map.

<p>October 2021</p>	<p>Week of 4th - City council updated, and concerns and comments, if any, related back to the Commission.</p> <p>Week of 11th - Schedule calendar hold for Commission working meeting. Redistricting Partners prepares slides for council presentation.</p> <p>Week of 18th – Final scheduled calendar hold for Commission working meeting. Redistricting Partners slides reviewed by Commission (or chair) and city management.</p> <p>Week of 25th – Work week for Redistricting Partners to prepare final materials. Redistricting Partners produced and final slides and materials. All materials submitted into Legistar by city staff.</p>
<p>November 2021</p>	<p>November 15th - Presentation of plan adopted by the Commission to the City Council for their approval. If approved, Commission retires. Press release.</p> <p>Week of 15th - <u>If Council rejects the map</u> the Commission will meet to review Council’s comments and produce a final map. Production of new slides.</p> <p>Week of 22nd to 29th– Thanksgiving Holiday. Slides reviewed by chair and city management. Uploaded to Legistar.</p>
<p>Final Commission Meeting December 2021</p>	<p>December 13th - Present final map to Commission for adoption. Council is obliged to accept the new map. Press release.</p>