



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-21-115
Meeting 21-26
August 25, 2021

AGENDA ITEM 5

AGENDA ITEM

Approval of Redistricting Criteria

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION *dem*

Approve the proposed criteria to guide the redistricting process as set out in the staff report.

SUMMARY

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) is required by law to redistrict its seven-member Board of Director (Board) ward boundaries following each federal decennial census to ensure voting power and representation is distributed equally, based on population size. The redistricting process for special districts is mandated by California Elections Code Section 22000, which incorporates federal statutes and constitutional requirements, including the Voting Rights Act, and outlines criteria that may be considered while adjusting boundaries. The General Manager is seeking Board approval of a set of criteria to guide the redistricting process.

DISCUSSION

On August 11, 2021, District staff and Citygate GIS, Inc. (Citygate), a consulting firm chosen to lead the District's ward redistricting project, provided a presentation on the redistricting process, including background on relevant laws and statutes. At this same meeting, staff and Citygate proposed a set of criteria to guide the redistricting process for Board consideration ([R-21-23](#)). Based on Board feedback at the study session, criteria *vii* was modified to allow the Board to consider potential changes to coastside ward boundaries that nonetheless ensure sufficient representation of coastside agricultural interests. No comments were received from the public.

Final criteria to guide the redistricting process

The General Manager recommends Board approval of the criteria listed below to guide the redistricting process. There is no priority or ranking implied by the order in which the criteria are listed. The criteria integrate state law requirements, are based on principles adopted by the Board during the District's last restricting process in 2011, integrate feedback received from the Board at the August 11 Study Session, adhere to all applicable laws, and align with current redistricting best practices. The revised criteria for Board consideration are as follows:

- i. Comply with all applicable laws, including the avoidance of gerrymandering.
- ii. Ward boundaries should be substantially equal in population.
- iii. Ensure that minority voting strength is not diluted and avoid the fragmentation or over-compactness of minority groups as provided in the Voting Rights Act.

- iv. Maintain cohesive neighborhoods and communities of interest and, where possible, keep city representation intact within a single ward.
- v. To the extent possible, ward boundaries shall be created to contain compact, cohesive, and contiguous territory.
- vi. To the extent possible, minimize resident reassignment to avoid voter confusion.
- vii. Strive to ensure coastside community interests are represented appropriately.
- viii. Unless otherwise required by law, ward boundaries shall be created using 2020 Census geography and population data.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

This project previously came to the Board of Directors at the following public meetings:

- **October 10, 2020:** District staff provided a [memo](#) updating the Board on the consultant selection process, delays to 2020 Census data, and background on the 2010 redistricting process.
- **August 11, 2021:** District staff and Citygate provided a presentation on the redistricting process and proposed a set of criteria for Board consideration. The Board reviewed and provided feedback on the proposed criteria. Two Board members spoke in favor of examining the ward configuration in the Coastside Protection Area to ensure representation of the agricultural community. Two board members spoke in favor of avoiding alteration of the Coastside Protection Area. To retain the opportunity for exploring changes to the Coastside Protection Area, criteria item *vii* was rephrased to allow for further Board discussion in this respect. ([R-21-23](#), [draft minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

Following Board approval of the redistricting criteria in this report, staff will return to the Board on October 27, 2021 to review a draft set of redistricting plan maps.

Responsible Department Head:

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