



Palm Desert Redistricting 2023

Public Hearing #1

September 14, 2023

Background

Direction to Transition to Five Districts

On June 22, 2023, the City Council unanimously directed staff to take the necessary steps to transition to five single-member districts prior to the November 2024 Election.

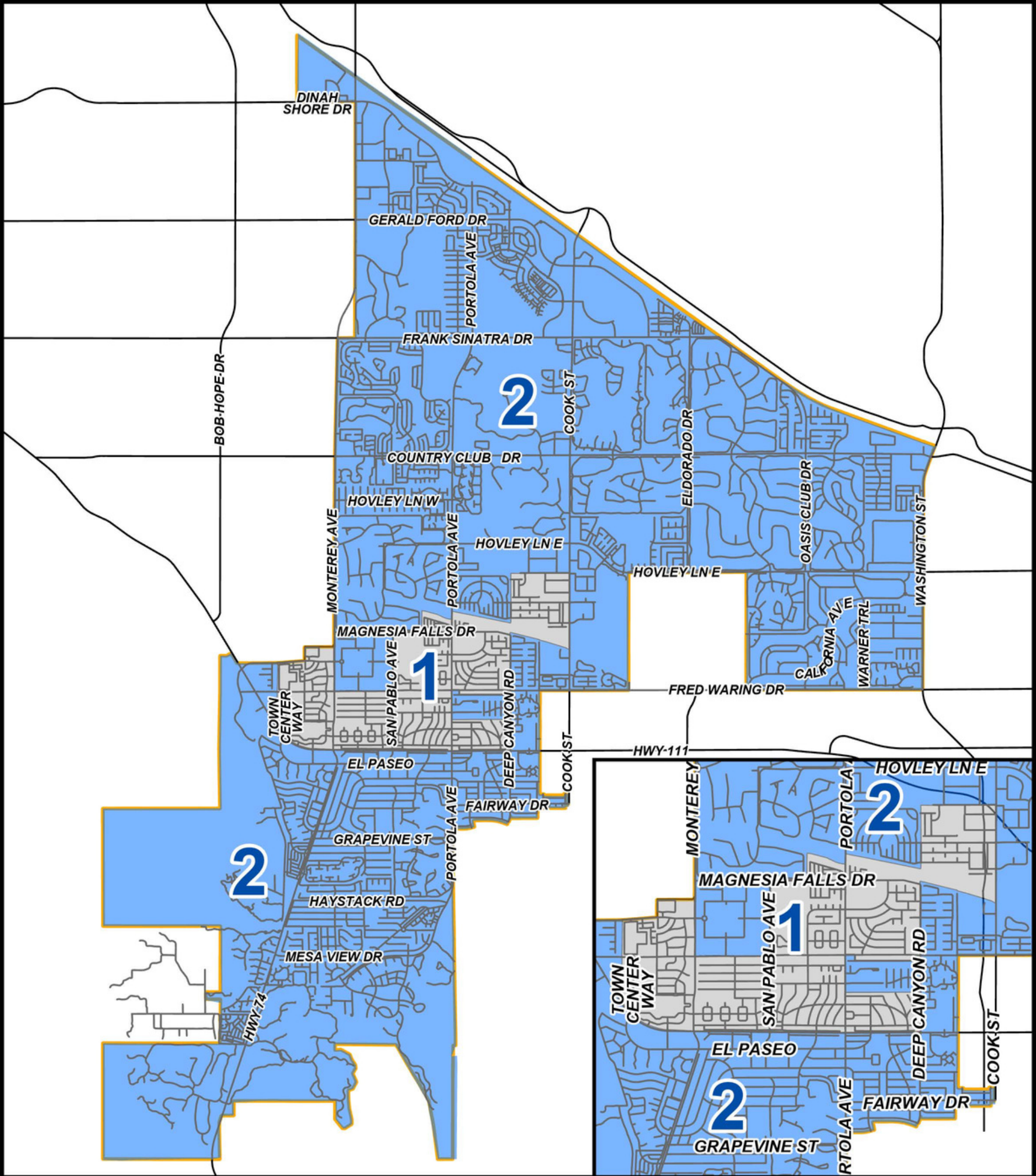
Public Education & Outreach Plan

On August 24, 2023, the City Council unanimously adopted the Redistricting Public Education and Outreach Plan

Purpose of this Public Hearing

- To inform the public about the redistricting process and to hear from the community on what factors should be taken into consideration while creating district maps.
- The public is requested to provide input regarding communities of interest and other local factors to be considered while drafting district maps.

Existing Two-District Map



District Map Drawing Criteria

| 1. Federal Laws | 2. California Criteria (in priority order): | 3. Other Traditional Redistricting Principles |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Equal Population | 1. Geographically contiguous | Respect voters' choice / avoid unnecessary pairing of incumbents |
| Federal Voting Rights Act | 2. Minimize division of neighborhoods and "communities of interest" (Socio- economic geographic areas that should be kept together) | Future Population Growth |
| No Racial Gerrymandering | 3. Easily identifiable boundaries | |
| | 4. Compact (Do not bypass one group of people to get to a more distant group of people) | |
| | Prohibited: "Shall not favor or discriminate against a political party." | |

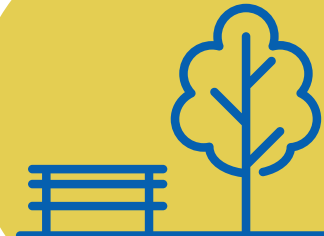
Source: NDC

Communities of Interest

Possible features defining communities of interest might include, but are not limited to:



School attendance areas



Areas around parks and other neighborhood landmarks



Natural dividing lines such as major roads, hills, and highways



Shared demographic information, such as:

- Similar levels of income, education, or linguistic isolation
- Languages spoken at home
- Single-family and multi-family housing unit areas



Common issues, neighborhood activities, or legislative/election concerns

Public Participation

- Provide input at an upcoming community workshops or public hearing.
 - Spanish and ASL Interpreters will be available at all workshops.
 - Spanish and ASL Interpreters available upon request for public hearings.
- Submit written comments in-person or via email.
- Subscribe for email updates about upcoming meetings.
- Submit a draft map(s) by Nov. 1 for City Council consideration.
- Request a presentation at a civic or community group meeting.

City of Palm Desert
Attn: Anthony Mejia, City Clerk
73-510 Fred Waring Drive
Palm Desert, CA 92260
cityclerk@palmdesert.gov
(760) 346-0611

Upcoming Meetings & Important Dates

For the full schedule, visit:
<https://redistrictpd.org/>

DEADLINE: November 1st to submit a draft map for City Council consideration.

1

September 28, at 4:30 pm: Public Hearing to hear public input on factors to be considered while drafting maps.

2

October 4 and 16, at 5 pm: Map Drawing Workshops

3

November 1: Deadline to submit maps

4

November 16, at 4:30 pm: Public Hearing for presentation of all maps and request that the City Council select “focus maps”

Public Comment Questions & Answers

1. Is the City drawing 5 districts or 4 districts?
2. Does the City Council have the discretion to adjust District 1?
3. What kind of risk is incurred if the criteria prioritization isn't perfect?

Public Comment Questions & Answers

1. The City is creating a five single-member district electoral system. However, District 1 was readjusted following the 2020 Census and is expected to stay intact. Therefore, this is primarily an exercise in dividing District 2 into four smaller districts.
2. The CVRA requires that the City *"implement an effective district-based system that provides the protected class the opportunity to elect candidates of its choice from single-member districts."* Consistent with the CVRA and City's settlement agreement, District 1 was drawn to maximize Latino voting age population (44.81%) and was population re-balanced following the 2020 Census. As noted in past meetings, in the demographer's preliminary best efforts it was discovered that any adjustments to D-1 results in "diluting" Latino voting age population (reducing their percentage in the district), which risks violating the CVRA and settlement agreement. This could render the map vulnerable to legal challenge. If the demographer or a community map drawer can create a map which improves the Latino voting age population in District 1, it is possible such map could be adopted.

Public Comment Questions & Answers

3. The prioritization of the criteria is clearly outlined in state law, but the definitions of those criteria are subject to considerable local interpretation and application. What qualifies as a 'neighborhood' or a 'community of interest' is highly subjective (that is why the law requires public hearings to gather public input on those definitions); what qualifies as an 'easily understood boundary' could be debatable; and what counts as 'bypassing one group of people to get to another group of people' can be highly influenced by local factors and geography. Clear failure to honor these priorities could render the map vulnerable to legal challenge.

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct the public hearing to receive public input on district boundaries.

Receive and file a report on the redistricting process and permissible criteria to be considered to redraw district boundaries.

For questions or to schedule a presentation for your community group, please contact:

**Anthony Mejia, City Clerk
cityclerk@palmdesert.gov
(760) 346-0611**

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