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November 9, 2021

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Honorable Board of Supervisors
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SUBJECT: Third Public Hearing to present consultant's draft maps, and to solicit input and testimony on current supervisorial districts and communities of interest to consider in connection with the redistricting of supervisorial boundaries.

Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct public hearing and provide feedback to demographic consultant regarding further adjustments to draft maps.

SUMMARY

On October 26, your Board conducted the second public hearing in a series of four for the decennial supervisorial redistricting process as required by the FAIR MAPS Act ([Elections Code sections 21500-21509](#)). Similar to the first hearing, the October 26 hearing was a second opportunity to solicit feedback regarding the current district boundaries and considerations that should be taken into account in redrawing the lines to ensure effective and fair representation.

The purpose of today's third hearing is to review initial adjusted supervisorial maps prepared by the County's demographer consultant, National Demographics Corporation (NDC). NDC took into consideration all the public and Board feedback received throughout this year's redistricting process, while prioritizing [the criteria](#) set forth in the FAIR MAPS Act.

The proposed maps as well as the public testimony received is available to review at www.redistrictmarin.org. The public is invited to continue submitting draft maps and public testimony about communities of interests. The deadline to provide public feedback and draft maps for consideration is November 24, 2021.

Current Districts are Population Balanced

The official adjusted 2020 population of Marin County is 258,553. The County's demographic consultants, NDC, analyzed the adjusted population data and found that the current supervisorial districts are population balanced with a total deviation of 9.18 percent. Primarily due to the exclusion of the San Quentin population, current District 4 is significantly underpopulated (-6.63 percent) relative to the remaining districts, while Districts 1 (2.49 percent) and 2 (2.55 percent) are the most overpopulated. Total deviations up to 10 percent are considered legally permissible provided the districts comply with the other criteria set forth in the FAIR MAPS Act.

Please refer to the table on the following page:

District	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Total Population	53,001	53,029	52,300	48,283	51,940	258,553
Deviation from ideal	1,290	1,318	589	-3,428	229	4,746
% Deviation	2.49%	2.55%	1.14%	-6.63%	0.44%	9.18%
% Hispanic	18.6%	13%	7%	31%	26%	19%
% NH White	65%	75%	76%	58%	58%	67%
% NH Black	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
% Asian-American	10%	7%	10%	7%	9%	9%

Testimony Received to Date

Public testimony received throughout the redistricting process and at the first two public hearings include a clear interest in Spanish-speaking communities in Marin, ensuring their fair representation, focusing particularly on the Canal area of San Rafael and similar Spanish-speaking communities in Marin with renters in multi-family housing, higher levels of immigrants, and lower household incomes.

Written community input received as of November 2 is included in Attachment 1. At a summary level, submitted input has largely focused on the following areas:

- Consider moving the San Rafael District 2 portion into District 1, resulting in San Rafael being represented by either District 1 or District 4;
- Consider adjusting the district lines around Central San Rafael so that one district includes the Canal neighborhood and surrounding area which has a concentration of Spanish-speaking communities;
- Consider moving West Novato into District 5 and the Indian Valley neighborhood into District 4;
- Consider moving the Homestead Valley and surrounding unincorporated areas around Mill Valley into District 3;
- Consider West Marin as a distinct area separate from the more populated, less rural and less agricultural areas to its east, if possible;
- Consider the benefits of District 2’s representation of smaller towns or areas in a single district in the Ross Valley area;

Several members of the public have more specifically requested ensuring that parts of some neighborhoods in or around San Rafael could be incorporated into one district to enhance the representation of Spanish-speaking residents in the Canal area. These neighborhoods include:

- The Lincoln Avenue Corridor;
- Portions of the Bret Harte and California Park neighborhoods; and
- The Montecito/Happy Valley area.

Board Direction

Thus far in the process, and in response to public testimony, Board direction to staff and consultants has focused on the following:

- Ensure fair representation of Spanish-speaking communities in Marin, especially in the Canal area of San Rafael and similar Spanish-speaking communities with more renters in multi-family housing, higher levels of immigrants, and lower household incomes;
- Explore options to reduce the maximum deviation from 9.18%, if possible, while also incorporating public testimony and complying with all of the criteria included in the FAIR MAPS Act; and
- Minimize the volume or extent of change to the extent feasible to avoid confusion to residents.

Adjusted Maps for Consideration

Based on the public testimony and Board feedback received, and following the criteria of the FAIR MAPS Act, NDC has prepared three maps for consideration by your Board (see Attachment 2). In addition to the changes outlined below, each of the maps presented for consideration includes minor technical clean-up due to census blocks changing since the 2010 Census.

Map A: Current Supervisorial District Lines (i.e., No Change)

The current supervisorial district map falls within the legal parameters for adoption with a population deviation of 9.18%, under the maximum deviation of 10%. Adopting the current supervisorial district lines (except for the technical changes noted above) would prevent residents from switching districts, potentially causing confusion, or inadvertently skipping an election cycle.

Map B: Canal Community of Interest

As previously indicated, there has been a clear community of interest expressed regarding Spanish-speaking residents living in or near the Canal neighborhood of San Rafael. The public and your Board have indicated a strong interest in ensuring fair representation of Spanish-speaking communities.

Of note, in 2018 the City of San Rafael transitioned from an at-large to a district-based election. During the process of establishing district boundaries, the City identified a community of interest surrounding the Canal neighborhood based on shared language, culture, income levels, multifamily housing, etc., which led to the City creating District 1 covering the Canal neighborhood, East San Rafael, and the “spine” of Lincoln Avenue (see Attachment 3).

Map B, proposed by NDC, expands supervisorial District 4 by following similar district boundaries as the City of San Rafael’s 2018 District 1, incorporating the Lincoln Avenue “spine” from supervisorial District 1 and also portions of the Bret Harte and California Park neighborhoods of supervisorial District 2. This modification unifies the Canal community of interest and better aligns the County’s district lines with San Rafael’s council districts. While this modification is less compact than Map A due to the addition of the Lincoln Avenue “spine,” Map B complies with the FAIR MAPS Act, which prioritizes community of interest considerations over compactness.

Finally, the Canal Map B proposal significantly reduces the County’s overall population deviation from 9.18% to 2.65%.

Map C: Minimal Change Map

At the October 26 Public Hearing, your Board expressed an interest in minimizing changes to prevent confusion and possibly causing residents to skip voting in an

election cycle by changing districts. With this direction, NDC developed a minimal change map that moved a small portion of Indian Valley in Novato from District 5 to District 4. With this change, the total population deviation is reduced to 7.43%.

Below is a comparison of each NDC proposed map, comparing the total population deviation:

	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Total
Map A	2.49%	2.55%	1.14%	-6.63%	0.44%	9.18%
Map B	-1.51%	-0.79%	1.14%	0.71%	0.44%	2.65%
Map C	2.20%	3.05%	1.14%	-2.01%	-4.38%	7.43%

Additional Considerations

As the County’s population is relatively balanced, significant changes are not legally required. While Maps A-C attached offer three options for consideration, additional public testimony included various proposals that, while considered, are not recommended to proceed from a staff perspective.

For example, moving Homestead Valley and some other communities within District 4 into neighboring districts may not be feasible as it causes a greater population imbalance than the current map. Testimony suggesting that West Marin be recognized as its own community of interest/district is likely not feasible for its relative lack of population in a large geographical, rural and agricultural area (approximately 16,000 relative to the ideal population of 51,711). Public feedback about consolidating the number of supervisors representing the City of San Rafael is also likely not feasible due to the city’s large population.

Public Outreach and Identifying Communities of Interest

Staff will continue conducting outreach regarding the redistricting process, focusing on collecting feedback on the proposed maps. The public is encouraged to continue submitting written feedback throughout November, and the proposed maps will be available on [DistrictR](#) for the public to review and submit modifications, if desired. The deadline to submit maps and input for the final public hearing is November 24. The public can access the mapping tools and submit feedback by visiting www.redistrictmarin.org. All public comments and draft maps received are posted on the Redistrict Marin website.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that your Board consider the three alternatives presented at this third public hearing and provide direction to staff and consultants to proceed with one or more of the options for further consideration at the final public hearing December 7 – including any modifications your Board or the public may wish to request.

EQUITY IMPACT:

Redistricting is based on the idea of fair representation and the redistricting process allows the public to influence how communities are grouped together for the purposes of electing County Supervisors. Marin has historically been a slow-growth county with relatively small population changes. A preliminary review with our experts indicates that current boundaries are likely to meet all requirements that protect minority voting rights. Despite compliance with legal deviation standards, staff has continued to lead a robust outreach effort to receive public feedback, and NDC will consider all public input in the proposed adjusted supervisorial maps.

To support the public process, we have formed a diverse ad hoc working group to help ensure a thorough process, in concert with County staff and contracted legal and demographic expertise, to assure equal representation in compliance with the constitutional "one person, one-vote" principle and the Voting Rights Act.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this informational report. Staff will continue to report back to your Board as the 2021 redistricting process takes shape in the coming weeks.

Submitted by:



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Reviewed by:



Daniel Eilerman
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Attachments: Attachment 1 – Written Community Input
Attachment 2 – Initial Adjusted Maps – Maps A, B, C
Attachment 3 – City of San Rafael 2018 Districting Map Layer Canal3B
(for reference)