



Santa Clara Valley Water District

File No.: 22-0119

Agenda Date: 1/25/2022

Item No.: 4.1.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Consider Proposed Adjusted Electoral District Boundaries Recommended by Redistricting Advisory Committee and Adopt Final New Electoral District Boundaries.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Consider proposed adjusted electoral district boundaries recommended by the Redistricting Advisory Committee (Map Plan 2); and
- B. Adopt final revised electoral district map showing new electoral district boundaries.

SUMMARY:

The District Act, in addition to federal and state law, requires the Board review the boundaries of the seven electoral districts established pursuant to District Act Section 7.7 before November 1 of the year following the year in which each decennial census is taken. The boundaries of each electoral district shall be adjusted if needed in accordance with Section 22000 of the Elections Code so that each district is as nearly equal in population to the others as possible. Adjustments of electoral districts are usually accomplished through the completion of a redistricting study, to ensure that each modified district meets the one-person, one-vote test, and to ensure compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act.

Redistricting Advisory Committee

To assist with the completion of a redistricting study in an inclusive, transparent, and comprehensive manner, and to garner community input on redistricting, the Board of Directors, on December 8, 2020, authorized the establishment of the Redistricting Advisory Committee (RAC) to assist with the following: 1) the completion of a redistricting study in an inclusive, transparent, and comprehensive manner; and 2) to encourage community input in the redistricting process. At its December 8, 2020 meeting, the Board also acted on several guidelines presented by staff as well as the recommended meeting schedule for the RAC.

Redistricting Guidelines and Criteria

For the 2011 redistricting process, the Board adopted additional transparency guidelines, direction, and procedures for the Committee to further encourage maximum public participation while further ensuring an open, fair, and transparent process. Similar to the 2011 process, on December 8, 2020,

the Valley Water Board of Directors adopted the following criteria as a guide to the redistricting process.

- 1) Equalize the population count in each district within 5-7%.
- 2) Minimize the dilution of votes and avoid the fragmentation or over-compaction of minority and disadvantaged communities.
- 3) Maintain cohesive neighborhoods within electoral districts and, where possible, keep neighborhood associations within a single district.
- 4) Avoid moving current elected Valley Water Board members out of their districts.
- 5) To the extent possible, recognize the importance of parks, creeks, and public facilities in districts.
- 6) To the extent possible, provide income diversity within electoral districts.
- 7) Balance district interests with county-wide interests, but not at the expense or exclusion of individual districts.
- 8) Ensure that minority and disadvantaged communities have opportunities to participate in the redistricting process, including specific opportunities for timely and meaningful comment.

Completion of Redistricting Study and Recommended Map Plan

The Redistricting Advisory Committee completed all its public outreach meetings for each of the seven electoral districts, consistent with the Board's criteria for developing a draft redistricting map.

On January 12, 2022, the Redistricting Advisory Committee voted unanimously by roll call vote to recommend bringing Map Plan 2 (the second of two redistricting map plans it considered) to the January 25, 2022 Board of Directors meeting for the Board's consideration and adoption.

Map Plan 2 keep cities whole within a district's boundaries. For example, District 5 in this map plan uses the cities of Sunnyvale and Cupertino as natural boundaries and keeps the City of Santa Clara in only District 2 and District 3. Additionally, Plan 2 maintains known Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) populations, such as the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) majority-minority District 3.

The major changes to the overall district map are the result of uneven growth throughout the county. The neighborhoods of northeast San José grew much faster than the rest of the county and resulted in the existing District 3 being overpopulated by more than 9%. The southeast area of San José grew the slowest in the county, resulting in District 6 being underpopulated by more than 6%. This uneven growth means that Districts 3 and 6 will change the most from their current boundaries.

Map Plan 2 makes the following changes to the current District boundaries:

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- District 1 expands into District 3 and 6, now unifying a previously split Alum Rock area (from District 6), and taking in the San José neighborhoods of Sierra Vista Hills and Suncrest (from District 3).
 - District 2 expands into District 5, to align these districts' borders with the borders of City of Cupertino and the City of Santa Clara.
 - District 3 remains a district with an Asian Citizen Voting Age Population above 50%. Under Plan 2, District 3 has an AAPI CVAP of 52.5%.
 - District 5 expands into District 3, to include more of Sunnyvale to account for the loss of population to District 2.
 - District 6 expands into District 3 to include the San José neighborhoods of Toyon and unite Sheppard, Independence & Jackson, and Las Plumas. It also expands into District 1 taking in the San José neighborhoods of Dove Hill, Silver Creek High School, La Vey, and Meadow Fair.

The recommended map contains adjusted electoral district boundaries for the Board's review, possible modification, and approval.

Map Plan 2 may be viewed electronically at the following link, which is zoomable down to street-level detail.

Map Plan 2:

<https://redistrictingpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/SCVWD-Draft-Plan-2.html>

The electronic map also has a search function in the upper right corner, where an address can be typed in and its location will appear on the map.

The attachments provide a large overview of the map plan, the map plan with an overlay of the current District boundaries, a map plan with an overlay of cities' boundaries, and also contain other details such as CVAP information and deviation percentages for each district.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACT:

Adoption of the new Valley Water electoral district boundaries is related to fair representation of vulnerable populations, including low-income, Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. Many of these communities endure the greatest exposure to environmental hazards such as cancer risk, toxic respiratory hazards, wastewater discharge, particulate matter, and other risks. A fair redistricting process ensures an equitable, meaningful political opportunity for all communities and avoids egregious political map manipulations or partisan gerrymandering, which can exacerbate environmental injustice impacts.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with this item.

CEQA:

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Map Plan 2 Single Map Overview

Attachment 2: Map Plan 2 with Census Data

Attachment 3: Map Plan 2 with Existing District Lines Overlay

Attachment 4: Map Plan 2 with Cities Overlay

Attachment 5: PowerPoint

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

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