

Open House 2

A Conversation about District Boundaries for City Elections

Purpose: To hear from residents about what's important to them as the City of Palm Desert decides district boundaries for future city elections



**Wednesday
February 12
6 p.m.**

**Palm Desert
Community Center
43900 San Pablo Ave.
(next to Civic Center Park)**

**Food, childcare, & Spanish
translation provided**

www.representpd.org



PALM DESERT

Frequently Asked Questions

How many people are on the City Council?

Five council members elected to four-year terms represent Palm Desert residents. This will not change.

What is changing in Palm Desert's election process?

Starting in November 2020, Palm Desert will move from an at-large election process where voters across the city vote for all members of the City Council to a district system. Voters in each district area will choose their representatives, who must also live in that district area.

How will the proposed two-district election process work?

The City would create a new downtown district from which one council member would be elected. The remaining four council members would continue to be elected at-large from the surrounding district.

How did we get here?

The innovative two-district election process follows the City's legal settlement related to the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA). This settlement embraces the goals of the CVRA and preserves the integrity and unity of the community while saving the City millions in potential legal fees.

Why two districts instead of five?

The two-district solution, which is described in the legal settlement and supported by the City Council, largely preserves the election system that has helped Palm Desert become a prosperous and cohesive community over the last 50 years. This solution also embraces the intent of the California Voting Rights Act and protects the City from costly CVRA-based legal challenges.

What is the California Voting Rights Act?

In 2001, the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) was enacted to implement California's constitutional guarantees of equal protection and the right to vote. Jurisdictions can be sued if they elect their governing body using an at-large system rather than a system with districts. If the court rules against the jurisdiction, the jurisdiction must change its election system and pay for attorneys, experts and other expenses incurred by the City and the plaintiffs.

What are the terms of the settlement?

The settlement would create a new downtown district represented by one elected City Council member as well as a larger surrounding district from which four Council members would be elected at-large. The settlement also calls for the implementation of Ranked Choice Voting in both districts.

What is the new downtown district?

The new downtown district would include neighborhoods in the El Paseo, San Pablo Avenue, and Civic Center areas. Its final boundaries will be determined with input from residents.

What is Ranked Choice Voting?

Ranked Choice Voting is an electoral system in which voters rank candidates on the ballot in order of preference. This system is used for state primary, congressional, and presidential (2020) elections in Maine and in certain local jurisdictions across the nation, including some in California.

What role do community members have in this decision?

While the legal settlement provides for a two-district solution, the City of Palm Desert wants to hear from community members as we fine-tune the final district boundaries and identify neighborhoods with common concerns.

Who will draw and approve the final district maps?

Although there will not be a public vote on the districts, the City's interest is to achieve a final map that ensures the voices and votes of all Palm Desert residents are heard and represented. After a series of public hearings, the City Council will vote on the final maps.

Where can I find more information?

Visit www.representpd.org, call Palm Desert City Hall at 760-776-6380 or attend a community meeting.



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