

**COMMUNITY NEWS**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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## **New Election System Will Have 5 Districts**

**City Council Agrees to District Elections with Rotational Mayor, Community Input Needed**

**San Mateo, CA** — In the midst of a fast-paced process to undergo a major transition to the City of San Mateo's election system, the Council agreed to ask residents to submit ideas for how the City should be split into five districts.

After listening to the public and having a thoughtful conversation during a public hearing on Sept. 13, 2021, the Council agreed to keep San Mateo's council to five members who would rotate annually as mayor. The key difference in a new by-district election system is that future voters will only be able to vote for one City Council member who resides in their district.

The City is now actively seeking community input as it creates San Mateo's first district elections map with the goal of completing the process by Nov. 15, 2021. Residents will soon be asked to start submitting their ideas for how the City should be divided into five districts, by using new online mapping tools or paper maps to draw district lines. Feedback on communities of interest and what neighborhoods should be grouped together in districts can continue to be provided at [www.cityofsanmateo.org/districtelections](http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/districtelections).

The public is invited to join in-person community workshop on Saturday, Sept. 25 at 2 p.m. at the Main Library where residents can draw maps of how they think the City should be split into five districts. The first set of draft maps will be presented during a Sept. 30 public hearing via Zoom. Following public and council input, an updated set of maps will be considered on Oct. 14. The final preferred map will be incorporated into an ordinance up for an initial vote on Nov. 1, with final consideration scheduled for Nov. 15, 2021.

The City began the process of transitioning to future council elections by district after receiving a demand letter alleging the City's current at-large election system violates the California Voting Rights Act. Creation of the City's first district election map will transform how voters elect future City Council members with residents voting for only one member who must live in their district. The first by-district council elections would take place in November 2022 with three seats up for election, and the remaining two seats will be up for election in November 2024. A Charter amendment is not a prerequisite to implementing by-district elections with five council seats, but may be presented to voters as a clean up measure on a future ballot.

While this issue relates to local elections, the change will ultimately affect all City of San Mateo residents regardless if they are voters, as the Council makes a range of policy and funding decisions that impact everything from housing and childcare programs, to traffic and parks improvements.

Residents can learn more and sign up to get involved on the City's new District Elections web page: [www.cityofsanmateo.org/districtelections](http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/districtelections).

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