

INTRODUCED: December 13, 2021

A RESOLUTION No. 2021-R084

To adopt redistricting criteria and a redistricting schedule for the 2021 decennial redistricting of Council and School Board election districts.

Patrons – All Members of Council

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: DEC 21 2021 AT 1 P.M.

WHEREAS, article VII, section 5 of the Constitution of Virginia provides that the governing bodies of all localities within the Commonwealth of Virginia, whose members are elected by district, may change the boundaries of districts and shall reapportion the representation in the governing body among the districts, as provided by law, every ten years; and

WHEREAS, the Council last conducted such redistricting in 2011 and, as required by article VII, section 5 of the Constitution of Virginia, the Council must redistrict the nine City Council and School Board election districts in 2021; and

AYES: 5 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: DEC 21 2021 REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

WHEREAS, as indicated by the 2020 United States Census, the population within the city of Richmond has increased since 2010; and

WHEREAS, the United States Constitution, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Code of Virginia require that each voting district within a locality be equal in population in furtherance of the “one person, one vote” standard; and

WHEREAS, in order to comply with the requirements of the United States Constitution, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Constitution of Virginia and other applicable federal and state laws, the Council is of the opinion that any redistricting plan adopted by the Council should adhere to certain traditional redistricting criteria; and

WHEREAS, section 24.2-129(B) of the Code of the Virginia (1950), as amended, provides that, prior to enacting or seeking to administer a new redistricting plan, the Council shall cause to be published on the official website for the locality the proposed redistricting plan and general notice of opportunity for public comment on the proposed redistricting plan; and

WHEREAS, section 24.2-129(B) of the Code of the Virginia (1950), as amended, further provides that the Council shall also publicize the notice through press releases and such other media as will best serve the public, and “that such notice shall be made at least 45 days in advance of the last date prescribed in the notice for public comment;” and

WHEREAS, section 24.2-129(B) of the Code of the Virginia (1950), as amended, also provides that “[p]ublic comment shall be accepted for a period of no fewer than 30 days” and that “[d]uring this period, the governing body shall afford interested persons an opportunity to submit data, views, and arguments in writing by mail, fax, or email, or through an online public comment forum on the official website for the locality if one has been established;” and

WHEREAS, as section 24.2-129(B) of the Code of the Virginia (1950), as amended, also mandates that the Council “shall conduct at least one public hearing during this 30-day period to receive public comment on the [newly-drawn redistricting plan],” the Council will conduct at least one public hearing in order to gather input from citizens concerning the newly-drawn redistricting plan; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that it is in the best interests of the citizens of the City of Richmond that any redistricting plan adopted by the Council, wherever possible, avoid splits of voting precincts between Council, School Board, state legislative and congressional election districts; maximize voter convenience and the effective administration of elections; preserve communities of interest; and consolidate smaller voting precincts so that the number of registered voters in each precinct is at least the statewide average; and

WHEREAS, the Council further believes that it is in the best interests of the citizens of the City of Richmond that the Council adopt the redistricting schedule outlined in the document entitled “2021 Redistricting Schedule for the City of Richmond,” a copy of which is attached to this resolution;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the Council hereby adopts the following redistricting criteria for the 2021 decennial redistricting of Council and School Board election districts:

1. The 2021 Council redistricting plan shall fully comply with all relevant federal and state laws with regard to the protection of voting rights.

2. The 2021 Council redistricting plan should, to the extent feasible, avoid splits of voting precincts between the Council, School Board, state legislative and congressional election districts.

3. The 2021 Council redistricting plan should, to the extent feasible, maximize voter convenience and the effective administration of elections.

4. The 2021 Council redistricting plan should, wherever possible, preserve communities of interest as defined in section 24.2-304.04 of the Code of the Virginia (1950), as amended.

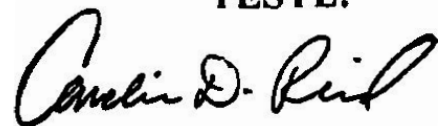
5. The 2021 redistricting plan should, if possible, consolidate smaller voting precincts so that the number of registered voters in each precinct is at least the statewide average.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Council hereby adopts the redistricting schedule outlined in the document entitled “2021 Redistricting Schedule for the City of Richmond,” a copy of which is attached to this resolution.

A TRUE COPY:

TESTE:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amelia D. Reed". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

City Clerk

2021 REDISTRICTING SCHEDULE FOR THE CITY OF RICHMOND

<u>Date</u>	<u>Redistricting Activity</u>	<u>State Code Reference</u>
December 6	Presentation of criteria and schedule to City Council	
December 13	Introduction and adoption of redistricting criteria and schedule	
December 15	Publish notice and schedule concerning redistricting process	Va. Code § 24.2-129(B)
January 24	Introduction of redistricting plan or plans for public comment	
January 25	30-Day public comment period begins	Va. Code § 24.2-129(B)
February 14	Public hearing on proposed plan or plans	Va. Code § 24.2-129(B)
February 28	Public hearing and adoption of final redistricting plan Publish notice of final redistricting plan	Va. Code § 24.2-129(C)
March 30	Adopted redistricting plan takes effect	Va. Code § 24.2-129(C)



Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

Council Ordinance/Resolution Request

TO Haskell Brown, Interim Richmond City Attorney

FROM Joyce L. Davis, Interim Council Chief of Staff
Office of the Council Chief of Staff

COPY Cynthia Newbille, President
All Members of Council
Tabrica Rentz, Interim Deputy City Attorney

DATE December 7, 2021

PAGE/s 1 of 2
TITLE Adoption of Redistricting Criteria Schedule

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance** **Resolution**

REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

All Members of Council

SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Government Operations

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

To adopt redistricting criteria and a redistricting schedule for the 2021 decennial redistricting of Council and School Board election districts.

BACKGROUND

The Resolution request is to adopt redistricting criteria and a redistricting schedule for the 2021 decennial redistricting of Council and School Board election districts.

Richmond City Council will be updating and redrawing (redistricting) the construction of the geo-demographic boundaries of the nine Richmond Voter Districts, which are used by Richmond residents to elect individual local members of Richmond City Council, Richmond Public Schools Board of Trustees, and the Mayor.

The Constitution of Virginia provides that the governing bodies of all localities within the Commonwealth of Virginia, whose members are elected by district, may change the boundaries of districts and shall reapportion the representation in the governing body among the districts, as provided by law, every ten years.

Virginia State Law requires the Virginia localities to reapportion and redistrict voter districts, as per: Virginia Code of Laws/Code of Virginia » Title 24.2. Elections » Chapter 3. Election Districts, Precincts, and Polling Places » Article 2.1. Reapportionment of Local Election Districts, et al.

In accordance with article VII, section 5 of the Constitution of Virginia, Council must redistrict the nine City Council and School Board districts in 2021. Council last conducted redistricting in 2011. In response to results of the 2020 U.S. Census, which indicated population shifts and changes throughout Richmond, adjustments to Richmond Voting Precincts and locations are to be made at this time. The new Richmond Voter Districts are to be established in 2022.

Every 10 years (Decennially), voter districts across the nation are updated to reflect changes in populations over that time in order to increase equality of representation on behalf of voting residents when participating in general, primary, and/or special governmental elections.

Richmond City Council will use criteria in guiding and developing the new 2022 Richmond Decennial Voter District Redistricting. The goal of this criteria is to help ensure the 2022 Richmond Decennial Voter District Redistricting process is done objectively, honestly, and free from special interest, self-interest, and/or political influence in order to protect its integrity and outcome on behalf of Richmond residents and the public trust.

The 2021 Richmond Decennial Voter District Redistricting Criteria measures are to be used in conjunction with 2020 U.S. Census numbers in determining the construction of new Richmond Voter Districts.

Voting is critical to the democratic process of our federal constitutional republic and the ideal goal of redistricting is to have each eligible individual voter's vote carry the same worth and weight and similarly equal represented populations.

The Resolution request is for expedited consideration and adoption at the December 13, 2021 Council meeting. The draft Resolution, criteria and schedule are attached.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Fiscal Impact	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Budget Amendment Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact	\$	
Fiscal Summary: No fiscal impact related to adoption of the redistricting criteria. Possible fiscal impact if it is determined that additional precincts are needed.		

Attachment/s Yes No