



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 13, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **Preparing for Redistricting and Reprecincting**

You may be aware that the Board of Supervisors is required by State law to redistrict supervisorial district boundaries for the purpose of equalizing populations within 10 percent, following the release of the 2020 Census data. These are the same districts used by the Pima Community College Governing Board. Attached is a memorandum prepared by my Executive Assistant Nicole Fyffe describing the state and federal requirements for this process that occurs every 10 years.

The table on page two uses currently available population estimates, as the 2020 Census data will likely not be available until March, and shows the maximum population deviation between districts at eight percent. Since this is within the 10 percent threshold, one option to evaluate is maintaining the existing districts, which were cleared by the Department of Justice following the last redistricting effort 10 years ago. Preserving the existing districts, or making any changes, will require a detailed analysis of demographics, voter registration data and voter behavior at recent elections to ensure we continue to comply with the Voting Rights Act and the Constitution.

It will also be necessary to consider changes to voter precincts, which will then be in place for the 2022 elections. The memorandum includes a proposed schedule, initial list of stakeholders, and necessary resources to accomplish both redistricting and reprecincting before October 1, 2021. Both of these processes will require extensive public and stakeholder input, which will be designed to incorporate ongoing pandemic safety measures. We are also seeking input and participation from our new Recorder, Gabriella Cázares-Kelly.

Based on the state of our political environment nationally, as well as heightened efforts to recognize and improve racial and ethnic inequities, I think we can expect more interest and participation than prior redistricting efforts. In addition, the widespread availability of online redistricting mapping platforms, whether provided by Pima County or other publically-available platforms, will likely result in more participation. We will also be following the Arizona State Independent Redistricting Committee process that will impact congressional and legislative districts.

The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

Re: **Preparing for Redistricting and Reprecincting**

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I will place this item on a future Board agenda in February or March so that the Board can provide direction, including whether the Board would like to appoint an advisory committee.

CHH/dr

Attachment

c: The Honorable Gabriella Cázares-Kelly, Pima County Recorder
Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Brad Nelson, Director, Elections Department
Andy Flagg, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Dan Hunt, Director, Information Technology Department
Mark Evans, Director, Communications Office
Dan Jurkowitz, Civil Deputy County Attorney
Nicole Fyffe, Executive Assistant to the County Administrator
Diana Durazo, Special Projects Manager, County Administrator's Office
Erik Glenn, Senior GIS Analyst, Information Technology Department



MEMORANDUM

Date: December 30, 2020

To: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

From: 
Nicole Fyffe
Executive Assistant to the
County Administrator

Re: **Planning for Redistricting and Reprecincting in 2021**

This memorandum is in response to your request to begin planning for the redistricting of Supervisorial Districts, which will be required to occur after the release of county-level 2020 census data in early 2021. It also includes planning for revising election precinct boundaries, which is recommended to occur at the same time as redistricting. Input has been provided by those involved in the effort 10 years ago, including Elections, the County Attorney's Office, Information Technology (IT) and the County Recorder, F. Ann Rodriguez. We will solicit input from Recorder-Elect Gabriella Cázares-Kelly when she and her staff begin in the new year. Please note that you will receive a separate response to your request for the redistricting of Justice Court precincts as that process is driven by very different objectives and requirements.

State and Federal Requirements for Redistricting and Reprecincting

Little has changed with regard to the state and federal requirements for redistricting and reprecincting. State law still requires the Board of Supervisors to adopt revised district boundaries, equalizing the population between the districts within 10 percent, on or before December 1 following the release of the 2020 Census data. However, because the State now requires the establishment of election precincts by October 1 of odd years, and that process is tied to redistricting, October 1 is the actual deadline that will determine the schedule for redistricting.

The estimated 2020 population is shown in Table 1 below, as well as the estimated target population if all districts were to be exactly equal, as well as the estimated deviations from the target. These will of course be updated after the release of the 2020 Census data. Based in these estimates, District 4 saw the most population growth over these last 10 years, and District 5 saw the least, which is similar to the last time we redistricted. However, this time the population deviation between the most and least populated districts is under the 10 percent maximum. In this case, we may be asked whether we are still required to redistrict. According the County Attorney's Office, yes, the Board is still required to adopt district lines, even if the lines remain the same, and providing justification on why retaining these lines is the best approach.

Table 1
Estimated 2020 Population

DISTRICT	2010 POPULATION AFTER REDISTRICTING	ESTIMATED POPULATION 2020	ESTIMATED TARGET POPULATION	DEVIATION FROM TARGET	% DEVIATION FROM TARGET
1	196,488	219,962	213,227	6,735	3%
2	194,686	205,696	213,227	-7,531	-4%
3	196,003	213,490	213,227	263	0%
4	197,799	222,179	213,227	8,952	4%
5	195,287	204,808	213,227	-8,419	-4%
Total	980,263	1,066,135	1,066,135		

2020 EST. MAX POP DEVIATION (D4 vs D5): 17,371 8%

2010 MAX POP DEVIATION (D4 vs D5): 36,535 20%

In addition to State law, the new district boundaries must still conform to the U.S. Constitutional one person, one vote requirement to create population equality among the districts. While redistricting plans are no longer required to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) for preclearance, they must still comply with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Acts, enforced by the DOJ, which prohibits any government action that leaves racial, ethnic, or language minorities in a lesser position of being able to elect candidates of their choice, compared to the situation before the government action. In practice this meant last time we reviewed the 2010 estimates of minority populations for current boundaries versus proposed boundaries, and tried to the extent practical not to reduce the minority percent especially for majority-minority Districts 2 and 5. District 3 was close to being a majority-minority district then, and may be for this round. This prohibition became the primary consideration last round.

While there does not appear to be any new guidance from the DOJ, last round the DOJ suggested that voter behavior was also important to consider to prove that a redistricting map was not discriminatory. In practice, this meant we reviewed voter registration and voter turnout data for the current boundaries versus the proposed boundaries.

The State Independent Redistricting Committee (IRC) that redraws legislative and congressional lines is required to consider the following, but counties are not: geographical compactness and contiguity, natural boundaries and communities of interest. That said, the Board can still base their decision on criteria above and beyond what is required. Last time, for example, a particular neighborhood that had previously been split between two supervisorial districts requested to be placed in a single district, which was accommodated. In addition, the State IRC is required to redraw lines from a blank slate, whereas counties are

not. Previously, the Board appointed a Redistricting Advisory Committee and the Committee recommended maintaining the existing integrity of the Supervisorial districts, and used those existing lines as a starting point.

As for changing election precinct lines or consolidating precincts, State law now requires that the Board establish "a convenient number" of election precincts by no later than October 1 in the year preceding a general election (in other words an odd-number year). The Recorder has until January 1 to finalize these precinct boundaries. This Recorder deadline could provide the opportunity to change precinct boundaries if the State IRC again concludes after ours, and approves lines that split precincts.

After the Recorder completes the process of applying the new boundaries, the Recorder informs registered voters that they are now registered to vote in a new congressional, state legislative, or county supervisorial district. Candidates seeking nomination to elected office in 2022 will not know how many signatures they will need to secure on their nomination petitions until the Recorder completes the process; nor will circulators know where, geographically, to circulate petitions.

The last time election precincts were established was in late 2019 when we adjusted precinct lines between three adjacent precincts in the Marana area. We currently have 249 election precincts. The largest number of precincts we have ever had was in 2010 when we had 417 precincts.

Table 2
Election Precincts

Election Year	Number of Precincts
2010	417
2012	288
2014	248
2016	248
2018	249
2020	249

Given that we have already reduced the number of election precincts by over 40 percent in the last 10 years, due largely to the number of voters casting an early ballot by mail, Election Director Brad Nelson does not foresee recommending more than a 5-10 percent reduction in precincts 2021. There is no statutory direction regarding the maximum number of voters that can be in one precinct. The criteria used by the Elections Department to determine a reasonable and workable number of voters in a precinct is based largely on the number of registered voters in a precinct, minus 20 percent (to accommodate nonparticipating voters), minus the number of voters on Permanent Early Voting List. The remaining number of voters are expected to appear in person at the polls during the 13 hours the polls are in operation. Based on this informal formula, a precinct with approximately 3,000 voters is ideal. Last time, the Redistricting Advisory Committee reviewed and recommended revisions to precincts.

Proposed Schedule, Stakeholders and Resources

Below is a proposed schedule for this process, assuming the Board chooses to appoint a Redistricting Advisory Committee again. Last time Supervisors appointed one member each, for a total of 5 members.

Proposed Schedule

December 2020 - January 2021	Staff review of state and federal requirements, additional guidance, and prior redistricting/precincting efforts, to develop a draft redistricting/precincting process, including communications plan. Includes County Administration, Elections, Recorder, County Attorney, ITD GIS, Communications.
February 2021	Memo to the Board with recommended process. Board of Supervisors (BOS) agenda item for direction.
March 2021	BOS Appointments to Redistricting Advisory Committee. County-level Census data may be available
April 2021 – July 2021	Redistricting Advisory Committee meets, receives public input at each meeting and develops recommended maps. Deliberations and public input would be transcribed verbatim. Spanish language translators would be available for each meeting, with sign language, Tohono O’odham and Pascua Yaqui translators available upon request. Meetings may need to occur electronically pending status of the pandemic.
August 2021	BOS public hearing to consider maps and preliminary approve.
September 2021	BOS public hearing and final approval of maps (must occur prior to Oct. 1 State deadline for updating election precincts)
TBD	In 2012, the State Independent Redistricting Committee adopted legislative and congressional boundary changes that split election precincts. Therefore the Board met in February 2012 and adjusted precinct lines and BOS lines impacted by those precinct changes in a few places to be consistent.

In addition to the Committee and the general public, an initial list of other stakeholders includes the Pima Community College Governing Board since their district lines must match the Board of Supervisors, cities and towns, community coordinating councils for unincorporated communities, neighborhoods and HOAs, major political parties, the Pima County Election Integrity Commission, the Tohono O’odham Nation, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Chicanos Por La Causa, Democracia USA, and League of Women Voters.

C.H. Huckelberry, County Administrator
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Regarding the resources necessary to accomplish this, we will as you noted be heavily reliant on the mapping and data analysis provided by our Geographic Information System (GIS) specialists. Erik Glenn, GIS Analyst, will be assisting us and recommending GIS tools to allow staff and the Committee to make changes to district lines in real time and see the corresponding impact to the relevant demographic data. We will also have a dedicated web page as part of the communications plan. Additional staff dedicated to the effort would include from the County Administrator's office, myself, Diana Durazo, and Deseret Romero, Election's Director Brad Nelson, Civil Deputy County Attorney Dan Jurkowitz, and a representative for the Recorder.

Please let me know if there is anything else you need regarding this effort at this time.

NF/dr

c: The Honorable F. Ann Rodriguez, Pima County Recorder
The Honorable Gabriella Cázares-Kelly, Pima County Recorder-Elect
Jan Leshner, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Brad Nelson, Director, Elections Department
Andy Flagg, Chief Deputy County Attorney
Dan Hunt, Director, Information Technology Department
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