

Every Nevada County Resident Should Be Part of the Redistricting Process ***How to Get Involved***

By Steve Monaghan

Every 10 years the US Census Bureau conducts a national count of all residents across the country. This data is used for a multitude of purposes from allocating federal program funding to communities to updating district boundary maps. Boundary maps define the physical geographic area for a district and there are many types of districts including congressional, school, city, and county, which includes supervisorial districts. The County of Nevada is working on the Board of Supervisors redistricting project. Now is the time for residents to get involved in this process. Fairly drawn districts help our government work better and function more equitably. Equitable redistricting requires resident feedback. Your involvement today will impact the next 10 years in Nevada County.

Supervisorial Districts: Do they work?

County Supervisorial District boundaries get updated every 10 years driven by census data and changes and/or additions with communities of interest. New legislation has made the redistricting process more transparent and open to public participation more than it has ever been before. Redistricting determines which neighborhoods and communities are grouped together into a district for purposes of electing a board member. You have an opportunity to share how you think district boundaries should be drawn to best represent our community.

Supervisorial District Maps and Communities of Interest

The Census Bureau is stating they will have the census data to the County on September 30th, 2021. The State then needs 30 days to make adjustments. That means the County will have usable data the first week of November and can then start drafting new Supervisorial District maps. However, the State deadline for the Board of Supervisors to approve and adopt the maps is December 15th. There are public hearing and map posting requirements, which means the maps will need to be created, vetted, and adjusted with you, the public, and then finalized - all of this in the first few weeks of November. Typically, we would have several months to do this process.

There is a lot we can do with your public participation between now and November, when we get the data. We need input to help identify Communities of Interest (COI) which would influence district boundaries. AB 849 defines COI's as: "a population that shares common social or economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation" – What could this include?

- Lifestyle: e.g., community character, recreation, shared social gatherings
- Economy: e.g., major employer/industry, commercial areas
- Demography: e.g., income, education, language, immigration status, housing, etc.

- Geography: e.g., urban/suburban/rural, mountainous, coastal
- Political subdivisions: school districts, planning areas, etc.
- Place-based issues/needs: e.g., public safety (wildfire concerns), environmental (air pollution)

Public Hearings on Communities of Interest

Starting this summer, we will be conducting four or more public hearings to get your input on communities of interest and other issues that would drive changes to the district boundaries. If you have thoughts on COI's now, please send those to us via the email or phone noted below. We will use information gathered to start mapping COI's and posting those on our website. Digital mapping tools are available via the MyNeighborhood map application on the County's website MyNevadaCounty.com but a paper map and highlighter is welcomed too. Please be sure to include a description of the COI and why it should be in a single district. Do not hesitate to contact us with questions about the process.

Additional Resources

There is a lot of legislation and regulations that govern how district boundaries get defined. It can feel complicated, but your well-informed participation will be an asset to this process. Take the time to learn more with these resources:

Redistricting: What It Is and Why It Matters webinar by League of Woman Voters of Western Nevada County: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VK1f3aZbk1w>.

County Redistricting Website: www.mynevadacounty.com/3196/REDISTRICTING-2021.

- Overview of the redistricting process. Links to the webinar and other resources
- A general timeline for key dates and events
- An alert subscription to receive text and email alerts for when we post new information like notices for public hearings. www.mynevadacounty.com/stayinformed. Go down the alert list to "Redistricting Information."

Contact Us

Questions or comments

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530-470-2540

Please reach out to us with your thoughts and get involved in this community process. We will continue to keep you informed and welcome your ongoing feedback in the coming months.

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