

Fremont City Council Approves Resolution to Transition to District-based Election System

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At the Fremont City Council meeting on Tuesday, March 21, 2017, the Council approved a resolution to transition from an at-large to a district-based election system.

As mentioned in the City's [press release](#), the City Council made the decision to take this action after receipt of a letter on February 15, 2017 from attorney Kevin I. Shenkman. The letter states that Fremont's at-large elections violate the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 (CVRA) and alleges that there is evidence of racially polarized voting in the Fremont electorate. Under the CVRA, minimal evidence of racially polarized voting can result in a court ordering a change from at-large voting to district-based voting, even if there is no evidence of an electoral injury.

In a district-based election system, the City is physically divided into separate districts, and a candidate must live in the district he or she intends to represent. However, the Mayor's seat may still continue to be elected at-large.

Now that this resolution is adopted, the City has 90 days to assess and implement a course of action determining district composition and boundaries and a proposed sequence of elections.

The number and make-up of the voting districts and sequence of elections will be decided upon by City Council through a minimum of five public hearings as required by California Elections Code. The Fremont community is invited to attend and weigh in on the composition of the districts during the first two public hearings and to provide input on the draft district maps at the third and fourth hearings, as well as to provide input on the proposed sequence of elections. The City Council will consider adoption of an ordinance defining the districts and phasing of the district based-system at the fifth public hearing.

All public hearings will be held during the regular Fremont City Council meetings at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 3300 Capitol Avenue, on the following dates:

1st Public Hearing: April 4, 2017 – Composition of Districts

2nd Public Hearing: April 18, 2017 – Composition of Districts

3rd Public Hearing: May 2, 2017 – Draft Maps

4th Public Hearing: May 16, 2017 – Draft Maps

5th Public Hearing: June 6, 2017 – Approval or Denial of Ordinance Establishing District Elections

Community members are also invited to provide input, comments, and feedback by [email](#). Comments received will be shared with the Fremont City Council as part of the public feedback at the hearings.

Additional information and regular updates on the district-based election process can be found [HERE](#).