

## **Districting/Redistricting Process – Community Engagement Checklist**

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This non-exhaustive list encompasses suggestions for increasing access and lowering barriers to public participation in the districting/redistricting process.

### *Public hearings*

- **Number of hearings:** Increase the number of hearings from the statutory minimum and vary the dates and times of hearings. Hold hearings after normal business hours as well as on weekends to accommodate a variety of work and school schedules.
- **Location of hearings:** Spread the location of hearings throughout the jurisdiction, with an emphasis on locating hearings in communities who tend to participate less in local government. Consider holding at least one meeting in each existing district or region of the jurisdiction.
  - Ensure all locations are accessible to participants with disabilities.
  - Use locations that are inviting and accessible to participants who care for young children, elders, or persons with disabilities.
  - Pick locations that are accessible by public transit.
  - Consider the proximity of buildings that may deter participation in some communities, like police stations, probation departments, and court houses.
- **Language access:** Provide live translation services at public hearings in the non-English languages commonly spoken in your jurisdiction.
- **Webpage:** Post information about the districting/redistricting process, including time, date, and locations of all hearings, on the jurisdiction's webpage. The webpage should have all information and materials in the non-English languages commonly spoken in the jurisdiction.
  - The webpage should also provide information about how residents can submit testimony in lieu of their presence at a hearing, for example, by phone, email, by mail, or online.

### *Map drawing*

- **Map drawing software:** Make map drawing software (e.g., Maptitude) available for residents to draw and submit maps. Residents should be able to submit maps that include as little information as the outline of a single neighborhood or community of interest they would like to see kept intact to the outline of one or several districts.
- **Training sessions:** Hold in-person and virtual training sessions for residents on how to participate and, for more engaged community members, how to use map-drawing software. Trainings should be made available in non-English languages and online videos should be captioned.

### *Encouraging Community Participation*

- Use existing community groups to help with outreach: Consider setting aside a portion of the jurisdiction's budget for small grants for civic, community, and cultural groups to assist with outreach to under-participating parts of the community. Provide free informational materials and notices about the time, date, and location of public hearings to a variety of community organizations to distribute to their networks. Meet regularly with community leaders about strategies for encouraging public participation and for feedback about the map drawing process as it happens.
- Multi-lingual mailers: Send all residents of the jurisdiction at least one mailer about the districting/redistricting process and a short description about how to participate in the process. Ask community leaders from non-English speaking communities to review all translated material for feedback prior to printing.
- Diversify outreach: Encourage public participation in as many ways as possible. Post maps online and allow online feedback from residents. Print blow-up versions of maps and bring them to farmers' markets, soccer tournaments, libraries, etc. for residents to provide oral or written comments. Provide materials or give public presentations to a variety of groups designed to reach a wide swatch of the community (e.g., neighborhood associations, civic groups, churches/temples/mosques/etc., parent groups affiliated with schools, and volunteer groups). Use the jurisdiction's own and partner community groups' social media accounts to publicize hearings and information about the districting/redistricting process.
  - Consider publicizing hearings and information on local ethnic media, including newspapers, newsletters, radio, television, and social media.
  - The outreach and feedback processes should be drawn out to take advantage of word-of-mouth spread of information.
- Track demographics: Ask participants to voluntarily disclose demographic information, like neighborhood of residence, age, gender, household income, race/ethnicity, rental/homeownership status, to gauge how effective the jurisdiction's outreach process is in reaching residents who are representative of the jurisdiction's demographics.
- Official reactions: It is important that members of the Board or Council take the input of community members seriously, whether the input is a public comment about a specific map or neighborhood or a fully drawn map. Members of the public want to feel like their input was heard and taken seriously. It also encourages residents to participate in other local government issues.