

Redistricting Process FAQ

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What is Redistricting and Why Do We Have to Do It?

Redistricting involves setting boundaries on a map to create election districts with equal populations. Whether people are voting in a local election, or a statewide or Congressional election, having districts with equal populations helps ensure there is fair representation no matter where you live.

The United States conducts a count of its residents (called the census) every 10 years. The U.S. Constitution requires redrawing Congressional and state legislative district boundaries every 10 years, reflecting population shifts identified in Federal census data. The Minneapolis Charter requires redrawing Minneapolis City wards and Park and Recreation districts every year ending in '2' using the most recent census data.

Who Draws the Minneapolis City Ward and Minneapolis Park and Recreation District Maps?

In 2010, Minneapolis voters approved an amendment to Chapter 1, Section 3 of the Minneapolis Charter giving authority for redistricting the City to the Charter Commission. In addition to the thirteen Minneapolis City wards, the Charter Commission will set boundaries for the six Park and Recreation districts (three commissioners are also elected at large). The boundaries from 2002 must be adjusted to reflect changes in the distribution and number of City residents.

While authority for approving final boundaries rests with the Charter Commission, an Advisory Group of up to nine members appointed by the Charter Commission in May 2011 will work with the Charter Commission (which together is called the Redistricting Group) and staff to prepare the maps. Information about the Advisory Group selection process may be found on the Charter Commission website.

Who Draws the Minneapolis School District Map?

Boundaries for the six Minneapolis School districts will be set by the Minneapolis Board of Education, which may decide to use the new Minneapolis Park and Recreation district boundaries or create its own boundaries.

When Will Redistricting Occur?

In Minnesota, boundary lines are drawn in the following order:

- U.S. Congressional district lines and Minnesota Legislative (House and Senate) district lines
- City ward lines
- City precinct lines
- Minneapolis Park and Recreation district lines and County Commissioner district lines

Generally, the goal is to finish redistricting to allow time for candidates to establish a residence and file for office in advance of the August 2012 primary and November 2012 general election.

Minneapolis must complete its work within 60 days after the Minnesota Legislature completes its task or by April 3, 2012. For a more detailed timeline, see [Minneapolis Redistricting Timeline](#).

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In May 2011, the Governor vetoed bills passed by the Minnesota Legislature to redistrict Congressional and Minnesota Legislative districts. The Minnesota Supreme Court appointed a [special redistricting panel](#) to draw these maps if necessary, but there is still an opportunity for the Minnesota Legislature and Governor to reach an agreement early in the next legislative session. For details about the State's work and redistricting in general, see resources on the State's [GIS website](#).

How Does the Redistricting Process Work?

The Redistricting Group will work with nonpartisan staff skilled in using computer programs to crunch census data. Maps will go through a number of iterations based on feedback from the Redistricting Group and the public. As a part of this process, the Redistricting Group must hold at least four public hearings on the Minneapolis City ward and Park and Recreation district maps—two hearings on each first draft map and two hearings on the proposed (final) maps. Notices for all meetings of the Redistricting Group and all public hearings will be posted on this website on the [Meetings and Agendas](#) page and also on the Charter Commission's [Published Agendas](#) web page.

The Minneapolis City Council and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board have limited roles in redistricting. After the Charter Commission approves a Minneapolis City ward plan, it is forwarded to the City Council. The Council has no power to change proposed Minneapolis City ward boundaries, but it is required to pass an ordinance or resolution defining new precinct boundaries and designating polling places. The role of the Park and Recreation Board is somewhat different. Under the Charter, the Redistricting Group must submit the proposed (final) Park and Recreation district map to the Park and Recreation Board for review and comment. However, the Park and Recreation Board has no power to change the proposed Park and Recreation district boundaries and must implement them once they have been adopted by the Charter Commission.

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What Standards Must the Redistricting Group Follow?

Minnesota statutes ([M.S. 204B.135](#) and [M.S. 204B.14](#) and [M.S. 205.84](#)), Minnesota Rules (Minn. Rule 8255.0010 and Minn. Rule 8255.0020), the [Minneapolis City Charter](#), Charter Commission [redistricting principles](#) adopted in 2011 and [redistricting rules](#) adopted in 2011 provide information about the process the Redistricting Group will follow to redistrict Minneapolis City wards and Park and Recreation districts.

Federal law, including the Voting Rights Act and court cases, also apply. Federal law requires districts to have equal populations. In addition, the federal Voting Rights Act requires that racial and language minorities have a fair opportunity to elect representatives of their choice. Providing this opportunity requires mapmakers to avoid "packing" (putting minorities into as few districts as possible so they have voting power in less districts) and "cracking" (spreading minorities among so many districts that their voting power is diluted). Note that under the Voting Rights Act, it is the effect, not the intent, of the plan that is important.

Maps for Minneapolis City wards and Park and Recreation districts mostly follow the same standards.

- (1) The Charter requires the 13 Minneapolis City wards to have populations that are within five percent of the City population divided by 13, to keep them as close in population as possible. For 2012, the acceptable range is 27,958 to 30,900. Similarly, the six Park and Recreation districts must have populations that are within five percent of the City population divided by 6. For 2012, the acceptable range is 60,575 to 66,951.
- (2) Minneapolis City wards and Park and Recreation districts should be contiguous (include an area with an unbroken boundary) and compact (closer to round than to long and narrow) and not more than twice as long as wide, allowing for lakes.
- (3) Wherever possible, Minneapolis City ward and Park and Recreation district boundary lines should follow the centerline of streets, avenues, alleys and boulevards and run due East and West or North and South.
- (4) District numbering must follow a few requirements listed in the Charter.

(5) Minneapolis City wards and Park and Recreation districts can cross congressional and legislative district lines. For example, there are currently 11 state house districts and 13 wards. Similarly, Minneapolis City wards and Park and Recreation districts need not be congruent.

(6) The Charter states that the Park and Recreation district boundaries in place during the 1970's shall be retained as nearly as practicable in readjusting the boundaries. The Charter also has some specific language about racial and language minority groups specific to the Park and Recreation districts, but this is similar to requirements under the Voting Rights Act discussed above.

In addition, the Charter Commission has established the following principles to guide redistricting:

- (1) Keep communities of interest (a group that shares common interests such as ethnic heritage or specific economic concerns) in one Minneapolis City ward or Park and Recreation district where possible.
- (2) Change current boundaries as little as possible.

How Can I Participate in Redistricting

The ways that you can participate include:

(1) Attend or follow Redistricting Group meetings.

All meetings of the Charter Commission and Redistricting Group will be publicized about a week in advance on the [Meetings and Agendas](#) page of this website or on the [Published Agendas](#) page of the Charter Commission website. Draft materials may be attached to meeting agendas on the website. Materials reviewed at the meetings will be attached to the meeting minutes, which are linked from the agenda of the subsequent meeting.

Subscribe to meeting notices from the Charter Commission by signing up to [E-Subscribe to Charter Commission Agendas](#).

(2) Submit ideas at public meetings or directly to the Redistricting Group.

The Redistricting Group invites your comments at all public hearings.

You may also email questions, ideas or documents to the Redistricting Group at Redistricting2012@minneapolismn.gov. You must include your name and address.

Mail should be directed to: Peggy Menshek, City Hall, 350 S 5th St. Room 304, Minneapolis, MN 55415.

Please note that all submissions to the Redistricting Group or individual Charter Commissioners or City staff are considered public data.

(3) Apply for membership on the Minneapolis Charter Commission.

As a member of the Minneapolis Charter Commission, you would also be a member of the Redistricting Group. For openings, application forms, and more information on the duties of a Charter Commissioner, please go to the [City's Boards and Commissions openings website](#).

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[First page formerly entitled Minneapolis Redistricting News]

MINNEAPOLIS REDISTRICTING IN 2012

Charter and Statutory Requirements for Redistricting

The Minneapolis Charter provides that, in a year ending in the number 2 following a Census, the Charter Commission, with the assistance of an Advisory Group appointed by the Charter Commission, shall draw ward and park district boundaries so that the population in each ward/park district is nearly equal as practicable, or within plus or minus 5% of the mean population of the ward/park district.

Population

According to the 2010 Census, the population of Minneapolis was 382,578. The mean population for a ward is determined by dividing a total population of the city by 13. The mean population for a ward is accordingly 29,429. The mean population for a park district is determined by dividing the total population of the city by 6. The mean population for a park district is 63,763.

The Redistricting Process

State law provides that Minneapolis may not adopt new ward and park district maps before the state completes its statewide redistricting process. Minneapolis must complete its redistricting within 60 days of the time the state completes its process or by April 3, 2012, whichever is earlier.

The Redistricting Group (consisting of the Charter Commission and the Advisory Group appointed by the Charter Commission) is required to hold at least four public hearings in the redistricting process, at least two of those to gather input on the proposed final ward and park district maps. All meetings of the Redistricting Group will be noticed (see [add link to meeting notice page]) and open.

How to Participate in Redistricting

Citizens of Minneapolis may participate in the redistricting process by testifying at a public hearing of the Redistricting Group, by submitting written testimony to [Redistricting Group, c/o City Clerk's Office] or by emailing the Redistricting Group at [Redistricting Group email address]. To be considered, correspondence and emails to the Redistricting Group must include the sender's real name and residence address.

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Minneapolis 2012 Redistricting

- [Redistricting Group Members](#)
- [Meetings & Agendas](#)
- [Announcements, Reports and Publications](#)
- [Redistricting FAQ](#)
- [Census Information by Ward and Park District](#)
- [Draft Minneapolis Redistricting Plans](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Related Links

- [Minneapolis Census Information](#)
- [Hennepin County Census Information](#)
- [Minnesota Redistricting Information](#)
- [Minnesota Special Redistricting Panel Information](#)
- [Office of Secretary of State—Legislative Redistricting Information](#)
- [U.S. Census Bureau](#)
- [Minneapolis Elections and Voter Registration Home](#)

[Format for page previously titled “Redistricting: Minneapolis Census Data”]

REDISTRICTING: MINNEAPOLIS CENSUS DATA

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- 2010 Census Redistricting Summary, Presentation to Minneapolis Charter Commission by Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development
- Map of 2000 population
- Map of 2010 population by Ward with population variance from average
- Map of 2010 population by Park District with population variance from average
- Map of 2010 population by neighborhood

[Format for page previously titled “Schedule of Redistricting Commission Meetings”]

SCHEDULES AND AGENDAS OF REDISTRICTING GROUP MEETINGS*

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MEETING MINUTES AND AGENDAS

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*Charter Commission meeting minutes and agendas are located at [add link].

[Format for page previously titled “Minneapolis Redistricting Plan Redistricting Plan Maps”]

REDISTRICTING – PROPOSED AND FINAL MAPS

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Ward Maps

- To be provided when prepared by Redistricting Group

Park District Maps

- To be provided when prepared by Redistricting Group