



December 1, 2022

TO THE COUNCIL

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Re: Charter Amendment – Redistricting

Transmitted herewith for your approval is legislation to amend the City Charter with regard to the boundaries of the City Council districts. Subsequent to each decennial census, it is required that voting districts be reconfigured to reflect the “one person, one vote” rule. Under this rule, the total population of a jurisdiction is divided by the number of Districts within it – thus creating the “ideal” district population. New York State law requires that district not vary by more than 5% from the “ideal” population.

Attachment A is a report outlining the public engagement efforts executed to gather community feedback related to the redistricting process.

The City population total as determined by the 2021 Census is 211,328; dividing this number by four would mean that the “ideal” number for each Council district would be 52,832.

The 2021 population for each District is as follows:

District	Current District Population	Ideal Population	Variance from Ideal	Variance as a Percentage
Northeast	52,259	52,832	-573	-1.09%
East	52,096	52,832	-736	-1.39%
South	53,280	52,832	+448	0.85%
Northwest	53,693	52,832	+861	1.63%

As evident in the above data, all four Districts are well within the legal standard to remain the same. Based on feedback from constituents and in an effort to standardize population sizes among the four Districts, the below adjustments are being proposed.

- Shifting a portion of the boundary between the Northwest and South Districts to generally follow the railroad tracks beginning at the western-most City border and ending at Brown Street.
  - This shifts the area between Buffalo Road and the railroad tracks to the Northwest District from the South District.
  - This shifts the area between Colvin Street, West Avenue, Brown Street, and the railroad tracks to the South District from the Northwest District.
- Shifting a portion of the boundary between the South and East Districts to generally follow South Avenue beginning at Elmwood Avenue and ending at Linden Street.
  - This shifts the area between South Avenue and South Goodman Street, between Elmwood Avenue and Rockingham Street, as well as a portion of Linden Street between Mt. Vernon Avenue and South Avenue, to the East District from the South District.

- Shifting a portion of the boundary between the East and Northeast Districts to generally follow Clifford Avenue to the eastern-most City border.
  - This shifts the area between Clifford Avenue and Fernwood Park from Lyceum Street to Walbar Street to the Northeast District from the East District.
  - This also shifts the area between Clifford Avenue and Seymour Road from Woodman Park/Culver Road and the City border to the Northeast District from the East District.
- No changes are made to the boundary between the Northeast and the Northwest Districts, nor the boundary between the South and Northeast Districts.

The proposed Districts are included in Attachment B, as well as maps comparing the proposal to the current Districts in Attachment C. The impact of these minor adjustments would be as followed:

District	New District Population	Change in Population <i>(of proposed new Districts)</i>	Ideal Population	Variance from Ideal <i>(of proposed new Districts)</i>	Variance as a Percentage
Northeast	52,780	+521	52,832	-52	-0.10
East	52,798	+702	52,832	-34	-0.06
South	52,922	-358	52,832	+90	0.17
Northwest	52,828	-865	52,832	-4	-0.008

An analysis of the proposed changes was completed to ensure conformance with the Voting Rights Act. The proposed changes conform to legal requirements and continue the City's commitment to a redistricting process that respects neighborhood boundaries and values compactness and continuity.

A public hearing is required.

Respectfully submitted,



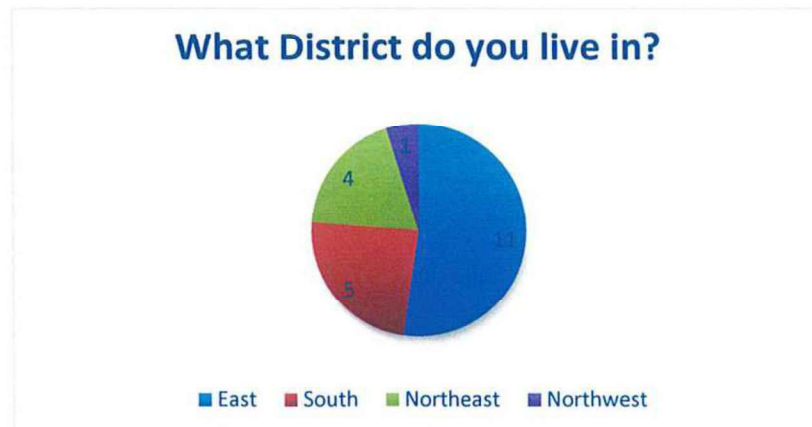
Miguel A. Meléndez, Jr.  
President



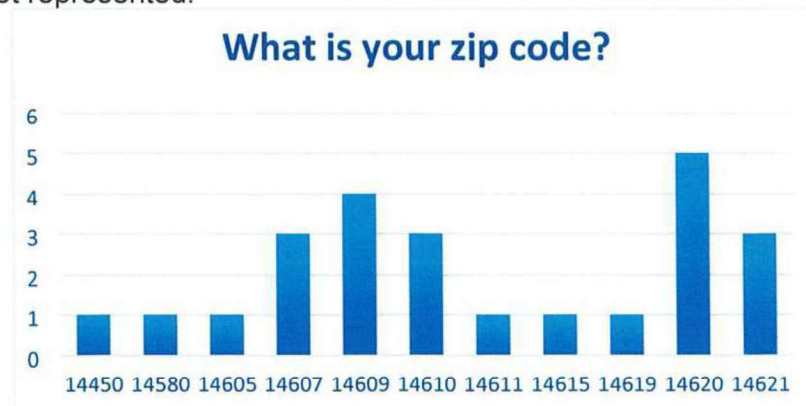
## Attachment A – City Council 2022 Redistricting Report

### Survey Responses

- Attached is a copy of the survey distributed; the survey was announced via a press release, published on the City website, and shared on social media.
- The Neighborhood Service Center and Library staff were also made available of the survey and provided a general overview of the redistricting in case any constituents inquired at their locations.
- QR codes of the surveys were printed and distributed to Councilmembers and at the public input sessions.
- The survey was open for a little over three weeks, from September 18-October 11.
- 24 responses were filled out, two from the same respondent, meaning 23 individual responses were received.
  - Three respondents do not live in the City, and therefore, are unable to complete the questions related to living in the current City Council districts.
  - 20 respondents live in the City; 11 in the East District, five in the South District, four in the Northeast District, and one in the Northwest District.



- The 14620 zip code was the most represented, followed by 14609. Many City zip codes were not represented.





- 16 of the 23 respondents felt connected with neighborhoods outside their own.
- When asked if they liked or disliked the current lines:
  - Seven respondents said the lines made sense or were fine, and three respondents had no opinion.
  - Five comments referenced confusion between the South and East District lines, specifically the South Wedge neighborhood being in both of the Districts.
  - One comment mentioned the need for the District lines to follow the Genesee River.
  - Two comments suggested District lines should follow recognized neighborhood boundaries.
  - One respondent noted their neighborhood, Grove Place, was split in two. A similar comment was made by a respondent who lives in the South Wedge.
  - One comment mentioned the District names were confusing and suggested simplifying the names to North, West, South and East.
- When asked to provide additional feedback or comments:
  - Three respondents were concerned about equity, specifically about gerrymandering, disenfranchising Black and Brown communities, and distributing funds to less wealthy neighborhoods more efficiently.
  - Three respondents praised public engagement; two of those comments encouraged continued engagement with the neighborhoods.
  - Two comments recommended changes to the District lines that would involve an amendment to the City Charter, specifically requesting additional Council districts.

#### Presentation

- Staff developed a short PowerPoint presentation in collaboration with the League of Women Voters explaining what redistricting is and the ongoing process, describing the current Districts, and summarizing the 2020 Census findings.
- The presentation was narrated and the resulting video was posted on the City Council YouTube Channel, the City Council Facebook, and at a dedicated City webpage, <https://www.cityofrochester.gov/redistricting/>.
- Copies of the presentation were provided to the Neighborhood Service Center and Public Library staff. Printed copies were brought and handed out at each public input session.

#### Public Input Sessions

- Two public input sessions were held at the Rochester Public Library. One was held in the evening (6pm) on Wednesday, September 28 and the other was held on a weekend morning (11am), on Saturday, October 1.
- The location was selected given the Library's prominence in the community, and because the physical location is accessible by bus lines and walkable from the Transit Center.
- An ASL interpreter was at each session, although there were minor issues with sound in the beginning of the sessions.
- The events were noticed via a press release on September 19, and flyers were shared on Facebook. Councilmembers were encouraged to share the flyers with their own social media and other contacts.

Council staff prepared a presentation in collaboration with the League of Women Voters for the Rochester Metro Area. The presentation was shown at the beginning of each session.

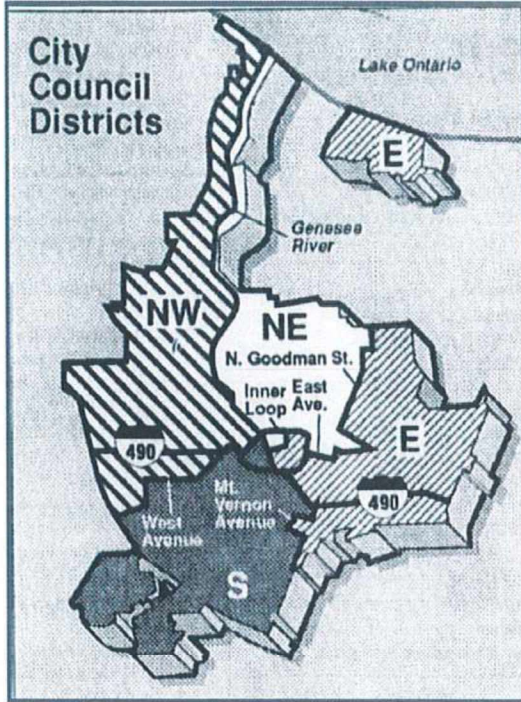
- Maps of the current District lines were displayed, along with previous District maps and newspaper articles related to past redistricting processes, pulled from the City Historian's archives.
- QR codes linked to the survey were on each table in the room.
- At the first session, one participant attended. They were in favor of creating additional District Seats, which is beyond the scope of redistricting and would require a Charter amendment.
  - The concept of eliminating At-Large Council seats and creating more than four District seats was presented vociferously by the sole participant. This concept seems to fall more appropriately into the category of changes and revisions to the City Charter as it pertains to the makeup of City Council than redistricting the current City Council Districts.
- At the second session, three participants attended, one being the same participant as the first session.
  - The other two participants came to the event together and were grateful for the overview clarifying the process as they were unfamiliar with the subject.
  - One of the participants emphasized the need to reach all communities, including the elderly population who need outreach to come to them.
  - The second participant thanked the Council and League for the work put into the process so far, but was concerned about reaching the youth population in the schools. They stressed the importance of using direct and indirect outreach – meaning social media *and* going into school to teach our younger population about these civic processes.

### Main Takeaways

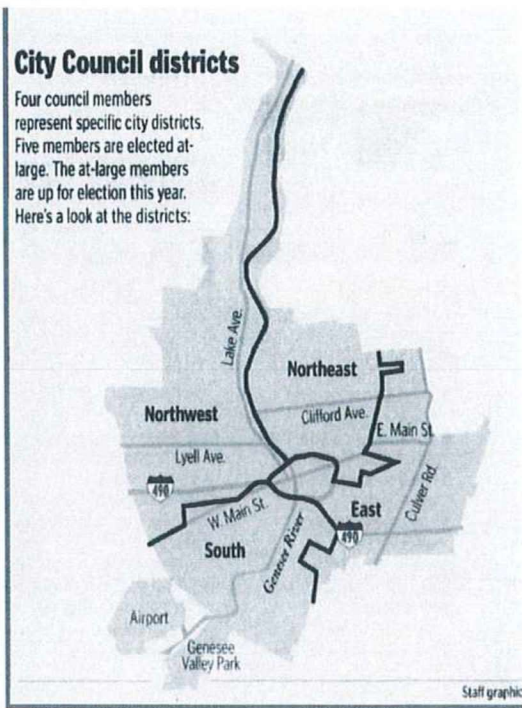
- Given the minimal population changes reflected in the decennial census, the City Council District lines are not required to change.
- The current District lines seem to be generally non-controversial.
  - Redistricting efforts received coverage in the media and yet still had minimal participant, particularly when compared to other local redistricting processes that have been more controversial.
- With only four apportioned Districts, there doesn't seem to be many other logical models for the general geographic makeup of the Districts.
- These assumptions are borne out by history, in so much as past redistricting over the past 30 years has only provided minor "tweaks" to the existing Districts, all of which look very similar to those in place today, as evident in the maps on the next page. Additional historical archives are also included on the following pages.



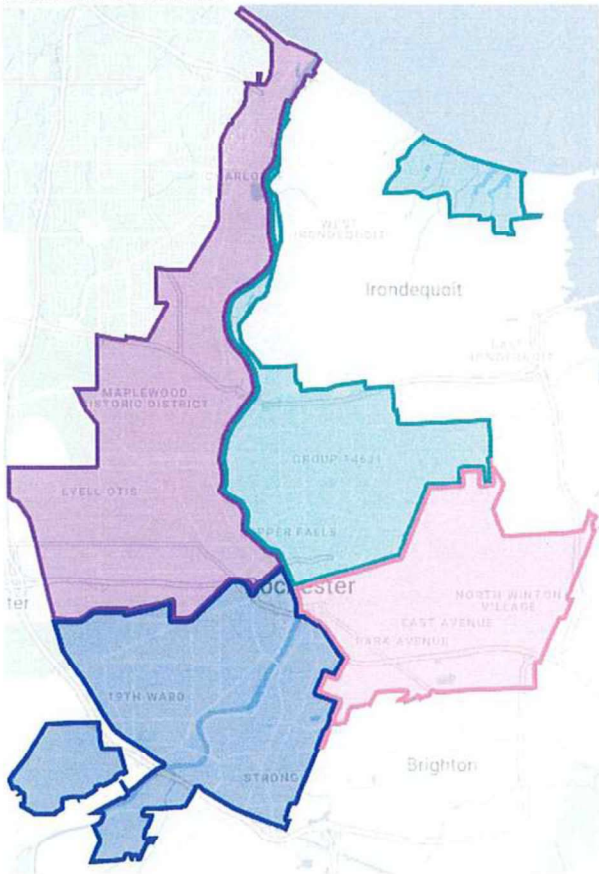
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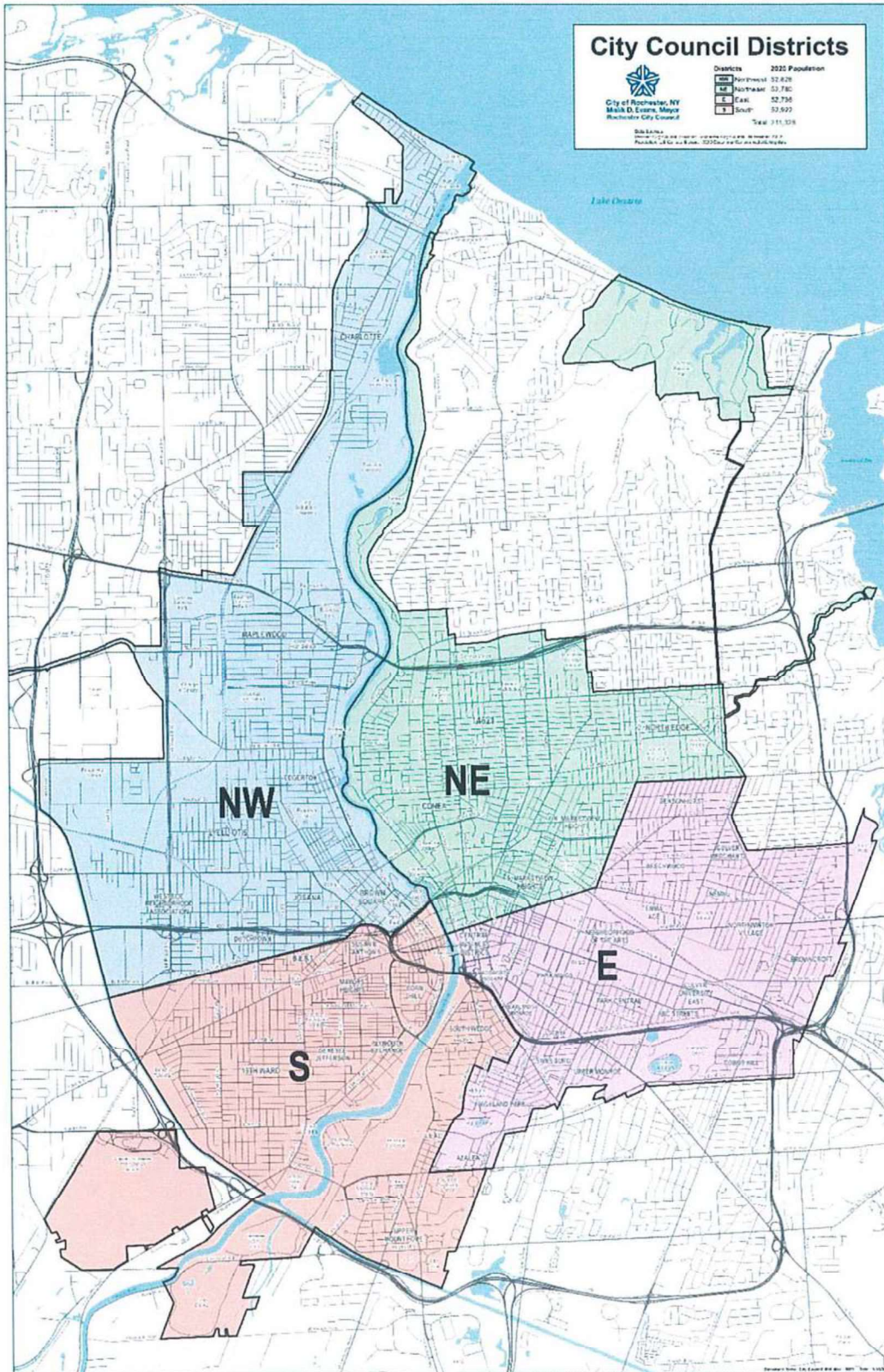


Current Districts:





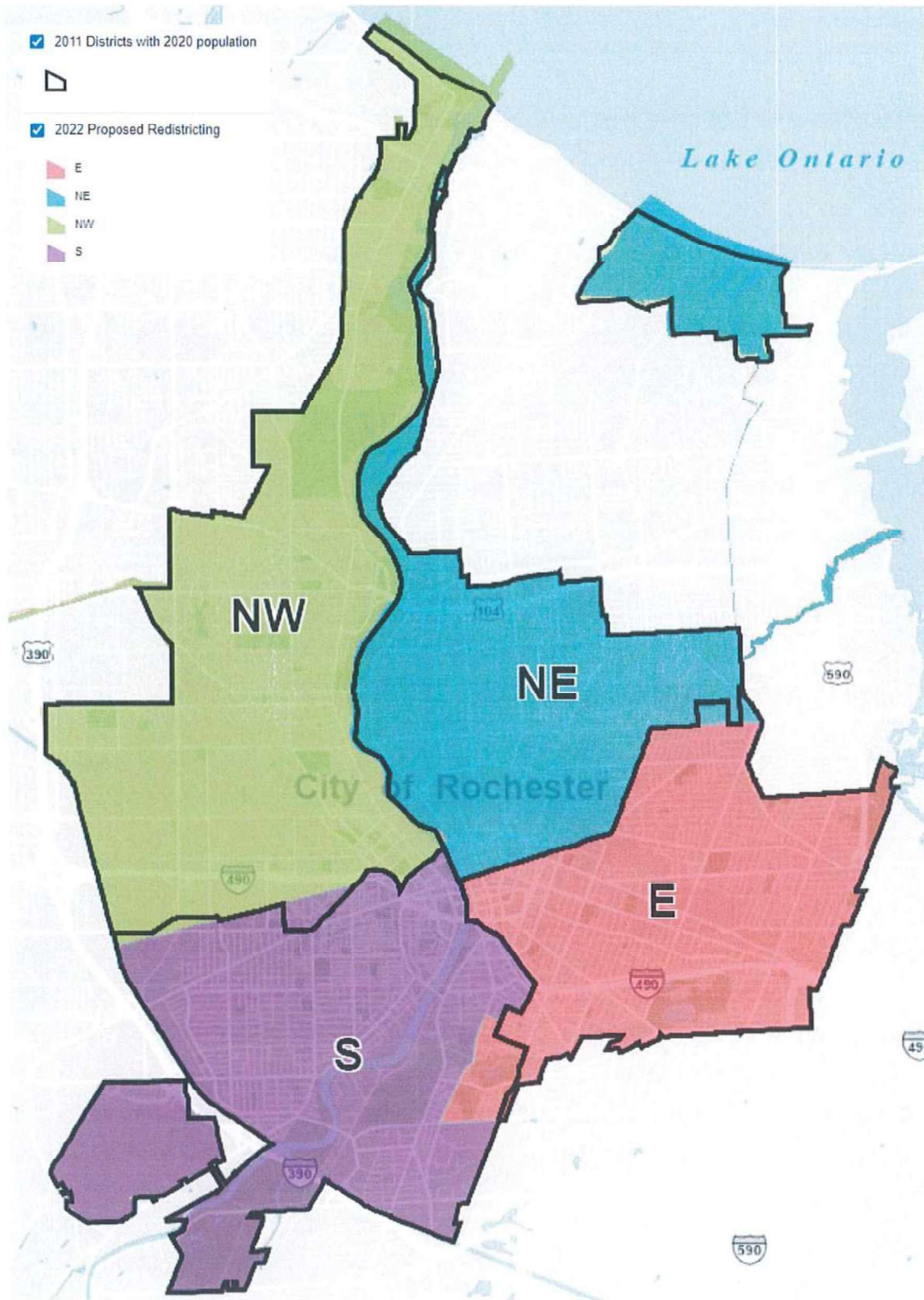
# Attachment B – Proposed City Council Redistricting





### Attachment C – Comparison between 2011 Districts (current) and Proposed Districts

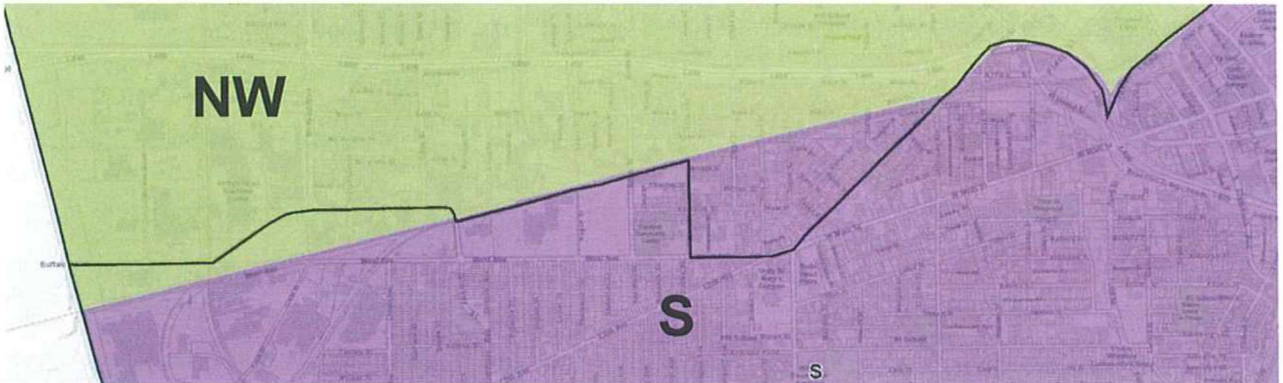
Current Districts are outlined in black; proposed Districts are the corresponding colors on the key below.



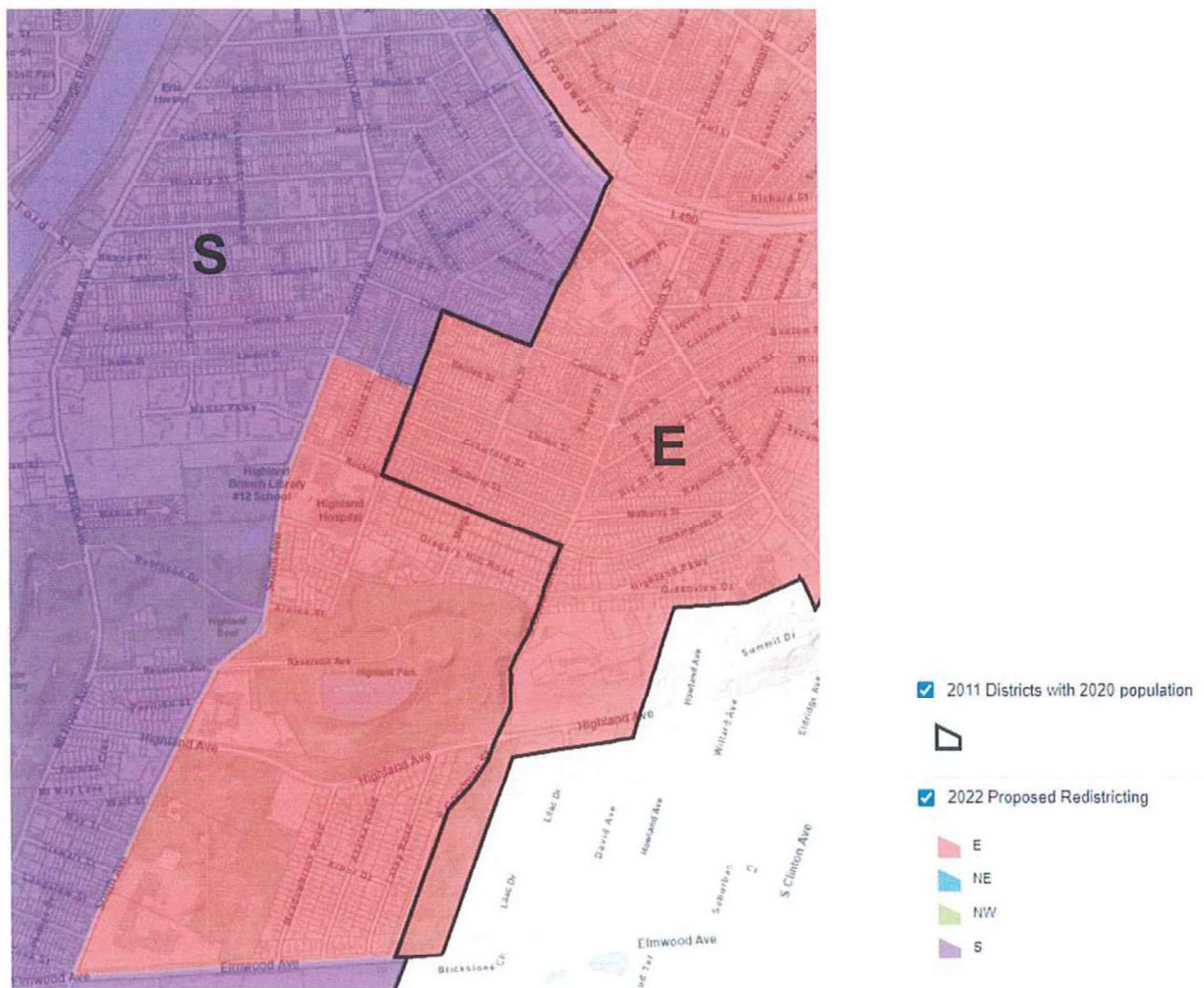


### Attachment C – Comparison between 2011 Districts (current) and Proposed Districts

Proposed changes to the boundary between the Northwest and South Districts to generally follow the railroad tracks beginning at the western-most City border and ending at Brown Street:

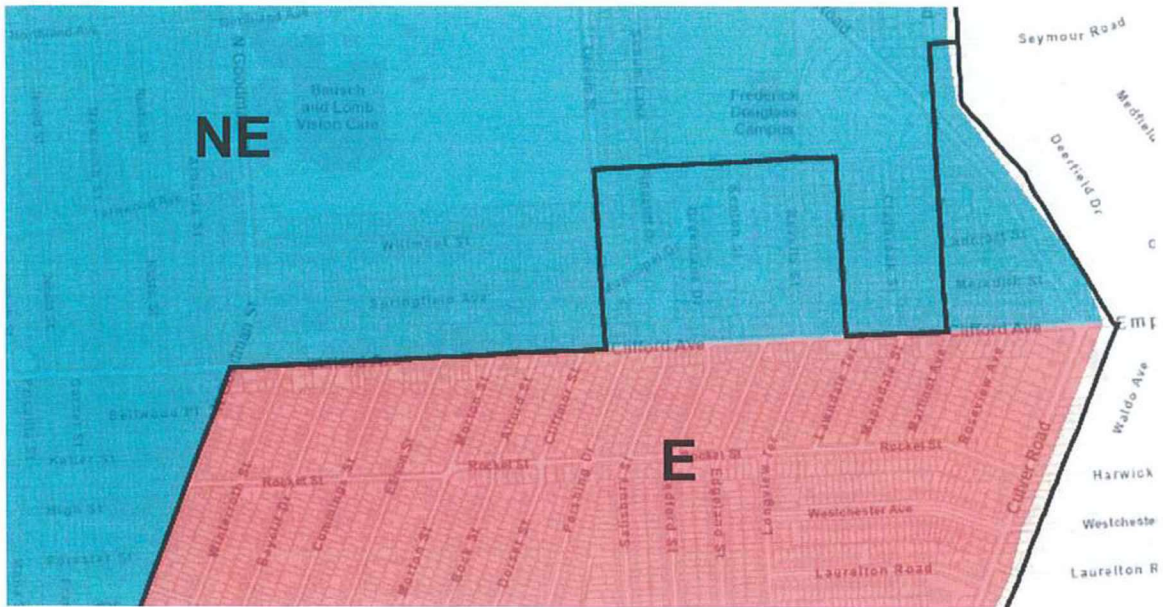


Proposed changes to the boundary between the South and East Districts to generally follow South Avenue beginning at Elmwood Avenue and ending at Linden Street:



### Attachment C – Comparison between 2011 Districts (current) and Proposed Districts

Proposed changes to the boundary between the East and Northeast Districts to generally follow Clifford Avenue to the eastern-most City border:



2011 Districts with 2020 population



2022 Proposed Redistricting

-  E
-  NE
-  NW
-  S



# INTRODUCTORY NO.

434

Local Law No.

## Local Law amending City Charter Section 5-3 with respect to Council District Boundaries

BE IT ENACTED, by the Council of the City of Rochester as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 755 of the Laws of 1907, entitled "An Act Constituting the Charter of the City of Rochester", as amended, is hereby further amended by amending subsections A, B, C and D of Section 5-3, Districts, to read in their entirety as follows:

A. The Northeast District shall include all the area described within the boundaries as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the centerline of the Genesee River and the westerly extension of the centerline of Marina Drive; Thence southerly along the centerline of the Genesee River to its intersection with the centerline of East Main Street; Thence easterly along the centerline of East Main Street to its intersection with the centerline of North Goodman Street; Thence northerly along the centerline of North Goodman Street to its intersection with the centerline of Clifford Avenue; Thence easterly along the centerline of Clifford Avenue to the easterly boundary of the City; Thence northerly along the easterly boundary of the City to the northerly boundary of the City; Thence westerly along the northerly boundary of the City to a point 33 feet easterly from the centerline of Culver Road; Thence northerly on a line 33 feet easterly from and parallel to the centerline of Culver Road to a point 33 feet northerly from the centerline of Hoffman Road produced easterly; Thence northwesterly on a line 33 feet northerly from and parallel to the centerline of Hoffman Road to a point 33 feet easterly from the centerline of Wisner Road; Thence northerly on a line 33 feet easterly from and parallel to the centerline of Wisner Road to the southerly boundary of Durand Eastman Park; Thence easterly along the southerly line of Durand Eastman Park to the easterly line of Durand Eastman Park; Thence generally northerly along the easterly boundary of Durand Eastman Park to the shore of Lake Ontario; Thence westerly along the shore of Lake Ontario to the westerly line of Durand Eastman Park; Thence generally southerly along the westerly line of Durand Eastman Park to the southerly line of Durand Eastman Park; Thence generally easterly along the southerly line of Durand Eastman Park to a point 33 feet westerly from the centerline of Wisner Road; Thence southerly on a line 33 feet westerly from and parallel to the centerline of Wisner Road to a point 33 feet south of the centerline of Hoffman Road produced westerly; Thence southeasterly on a line 33 feet southerly from and parallel to the centerline of Hoffman Road to a point 33 feet westerly from the centerline of Culver Road; Thence southerly on a line 33 feet westerly from and parallel to the centerline of Culver Road to the northerly boundary line of the City; Thence westerly along the northerly line of the City to the easterly line of the City; Thence generally northerly along the said easterly City line to the centerline of Marina Drive; Thence westerly along the centerline of Marina Drive and the westerly extension thereof to the centerline of the Genesee River and to the point of beginning.

B. The East District shall include all the area described within the boundaries as follows:

Beginning on the centerline of the Genesee River and its intersection with the centerline of East Main Street; Thence easterly along the centerline of East Main Street to its intersection with the centerline of North Goodman Street; Thence northerly along the centerline of North Goodman Street to its intersection with the centerline of Clifford Avenue; Thence easterly along the centerline of Clifford Avenue to the easterly boundary of the City; Thence generally

southerly along the easterly line of the City including the areas known as Densmore Creek and Tryon Park to the southerly boundary of the City; Thence generally westerly along the southerly boundary of the City to its intersection with the centerline of Elmwood Avenue; Thence westerly along the centerline of Elmwood Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of South Avenue; Thence northerly along the centerline of South Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Linden Street; Thence easterly along the centerline of Linden Street to its intersection with the centerline of Mount Vernon Avenue; Thence northerly along the centerline of Mount Vernon Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Caroline Street; Thence easterly along the centerline of Caroline Street to its intersection with the centerline of Meigs Street; Thence northerly along the centerline of Meigs Street to its intersection with the centerline of Interstate 490; Thence generally northwest along the centerline of Interstate 490 and the Inner Loop to the centerline of the Genesee River; Thence northerly along the centerline of the Genesee River to its intersection with the centerline of East Main Street and to the place of beginning.

C. The South District shall include all the area described within the boundaries as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the westerly boundary of the City with centerline of the CSX Rochester Sub Line Railroad; Thence easterly along the centerline of the CSX Rochester Sub Line Railroad to its intersection with the centerline of Brown Street; Thence northeasterly along the centerline of Brown Street to its intersection with the centerline of Interstate 490; Thence easterly along the centerline of Interstate 490 to its intersection with the centerline of the Inner Loop; Thence northeasterly along the centerline of the Inner Loop to its intersection with the centerline of the Genesee River; Thence southerly along the centerline of the Genesee River to its intersection with the centerline of Interstate 490; Thence southeasterly along the centerline of Interstate 490 to its intersection with the centerline of Meigs Street; Thence southerly along the centerline of Meigs Street to its intersection with the centerline of Caroline Street; Thence westerly along the centerline of Caroline Street to its intersection with the centerline of Mount Vernon Avenue; Thence southerly along the centerline of Mount Vernon Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Linden Street; Thence westerly along the centerline of Linden Street to its intersection with the centerline of South Avenue; Thence southerly along the centerline of South Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of Elmwood Avenue; Thence easterly along the centerline of Elmwood Avenue to its intersection with the easterly boundary of the City; Thence generally southerly along the easterly boundary of the City to the southerly boundary of the City; Thence generally westerly along the southerly boundary of the City, including Genesee Valley Park, to the westerly boundary of the City; Thence generally northerly along the westerly boundary of the City, including the Rochester Monroe County International Airport, to its intersection with the centerline of the CSX Rochester Sub Line Railroad and to the point of beginning.

D. The Northwest District shall include all the area described within the boundaries as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the centerline of the Genesee River with the westerly extension of the centerline of Marina Drive; Thence southerly along the centerline of the Genesee River to its intersection with the centerline of Inner Loop; Thence southwestwardly along the centerline of the Inner Loop to its intersection with the centerline of Interstate 490; Thence northwestwardly along the centerline of Interstate 490 to its intersection with the centerline of Brown Street; Thence southwestwardly along the centerline of Brown Street to its intersection with the centerline of the CSX Rochester Sub Line Railroad; Thence southwestwardly along the centerline of the CSX Rochester Sub Line Railroad to its intersection with the westerly boundary of the City; Thence northerly following the westerly boundary of the City to its intersection with the shore of Lake Ontario; Thence easterly along the shore of Lake Ontario to the



easterly boundary of the City; Thence southerly along the easterly boundary of the City to the centerline of Marina Drive; Thence westerly along the centerline of Marina Drive and the westerly extension thereof to the centerline of the Genesee River and to the point of beginning.

Section 2. The enactment of this local law shall not affect the tenure of the incumbent elected or appointed Councilmembers. The intent of this local law is to change the Council district boundaries for the next municipal election following the enactment of this local law, and each succeeding election thereafter. The incumbent Councilmembers shall remain the lawful representatives of their respective districts as delineated in Local Law No. 5 of 2011 until the expiration of their present elective or appointive terms.

Section 3. This local law shall take effect immediately.