

ARTICLE II. BOUNDARIES

§ 2.1. City.

The City has the boundaries established under law.

§ 2.2. Wards.

- (a) **Number.** The City comprises 13 wards, designated by number. If possible, a redistricted ward keeps the number of the former ward from which its population mostly came.
- (b) **Characteristics.** The wards must be as equal in population as practicable. Each ward must—
 - (1) not have a population more than five percent over or under the mean ward population, according to—
 - (A) the latest decennial federal census; or
 - (B) a special computation or enumeration ordered by the Charter Commission with respect to any particular block or tract, computed or enumerated as of the same time and in the same manner as the latest decennial federal census;
 - (2) consist of a compact, contiguous area, not longer than twice its width, whose boundaries lie wherever possible along the centerline of public ways and, as far as practicable, run due north-south or east-west. A lake, waterway, or other body of water within a ward does not affect these characteristics; and
 - (3) minimize change in existing boundaries, except as necessary in order to effect the foregoing criteria.
- (c) **Redistricting.**
 - (1) **Policy.** The City must redistrict the wards, as this section 2.2(c) provides—
 - (A) after each decennial federal census;
 - (B) as required by general or special law or by judicial decree; or
 - (C) when the number of wards changes;and may not otherwise redistrict them.
 - (2) **Commission.** For this section 2.2(c)'s purposes, the "Commission" means the Charter Commission.
 - (A) **Advisory group.** The Commission must appoint an advisory group of up to nine eligible voters in the City, who will advise the Commission about redistricting.
 - (i) **Qualifications.** Each advisory-group member must be a eligible voter in the City who has not, within the two years of being appointed—
 - (I) held any elected public office;
 - (II) appeared on a ballot listing his or her partisan affiliation in any election;
 - (III) worked as an employee of any political party (as defined by the Minnesota election law); or
 - (IV) worked as an employee for the City in any capacity other than as an election judge.

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- (ii) **Application.** Each applicant for the advisory group must submit an application to the City Clerk on a form that the Commission has approved. The Commission must accept applications for at least 45 days.
 - (iii) **Diversity.** The Commission must appoint the advisory group with due regard for diversity.
 - (3) **Schedule.** Subject to any applicable ordinance, general or special law, or judicial decree:
 - (A) **Plan.** The Commission must adopt a ward-boundary plan, which includes each ward's population and boundaries—
 - (i) after a decennial census, as the Minnesota election law provides;
 - (ii) when required by law or judicial decree, as the law or decree provides; or
 - (iii) when the number of wards changes, 60 days after the amendment takes effect (even if the change takes effect later).
 - (B) **Public hearings.** The Commission must hold at least four public hearings before adopting a ward-boundary plan, and must hold at least two of those hearings after—
 - (i) giving public notice of a draft plan or plans for at least seven days before each hearing; and
 - (ii) inviting comments from each neighborhood organization recognized by the City Council.

If the Commission reestablishes ward boundaries before the legislature has been redistricted, the ward boundaries may be modified after the legislature has been redistricted for the purpose of establishing precinct boundaries. If ward boundaries are modified, the Commission will determine whether any additional hearings will be held to consider the modifications.
 - (C) **Adoption.** The Commission adopts a ward-boundary plan by a majority of its membership at a meeting of which it has given public notice. The adopted plan takes effect when the Commission files it with the City Clerk.
 - (D) **Applicability.** A ward-boundary plan applies to the first general election for which filing opens after the plan takes effect. A plan does not affect the eligibility or term of any incumbent holding office when the plan takes effect, unless otherwise provided in section 3.2(d).
 - (4) **Funding.** The City Council must provide for the staff and other resources that the Commission needs.
 - (5) **Ordinances.** The City Council may enact any necessary or prudent ordinance implementing this section 2.2(c). No such ordinance applies to any redistricting process that begins within 30 days.
 - (6) **Jurisdiction.** The district court enjoys original jurisdiction over any case arising out of redistricting under this section 2.2(c).

(Ord. No. 2016-086 , § 1, 12-9-16, eff. 3-12-17; Ord. No. 2020-057 , § 1, 11-3-20, eff. 12-3-20)

§ 2.3. Park districts.

The provisions of the preceding section 2.2 regarding redistricting wards likewise apply as far as possible to redistricting park districts, except as this section 2.3 or a general or special law otherwise provides.

- (a) **Number.** The City comprises six park districts, designated by number. If possible, a redistricted park district keeps the number of the former district from which its population mostly came.
- (b) **Commission.** For this section 2.3's purposes, the "Commission" means the Charter Commission.

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- (c) **Park and Recreation Board.** Before holding the last two public hearings on any park-district boundary plan, the Commission must notify the Park and Recreation Board of a draft plan or plans. The Commission must consider any recommendation by the Board.

If the Commission reestablishes park district boundaries before the legislature has been redistricted, the park district boundaries may be modified after the legislature has been redistricted for the purpose of establishing precinct boundaries. If park district boundaries are modified, the Commission must notify the Park and Recreation Board of a draft plan or plans. The Commission must consider any recommendation by the Board. The Commission will determine whether any additional hearings will be held to consider the modifications.

(Ord. No. 2020-057 , § 2, 11-3-20, eff. 12-3-20)

§ 2.4. Precincts.

- (a) **Precincts, polling places.** For the convenient administration of elections, the City Council must divide each ward into precincts and designate a polling place in each precinct. Each precinct must lie wholly within a single ward and park district.
- (b) **Effective date.** An act dividing a ward into precincts, or designating a polling place, takes effect as the Minnesota election law provides.

(Ord. No. 2016-086 , § 2, 12-9-16, eff. 3-12-17)

§ 2.5. Annexed territory.

Any annexed territory joins the ward and the park district to which it is adjacent or, if adjacent to more than one ward or district, the least populous such ward or district.

§ 2.6. Special districts.

For the more efficient delivery of municipal services in the City and its surroundings, and with a view toward their orderly growth—

- (a) the City Council may designate any area within three miles of the City's boundaries as a special district, in which it may—
 - (1) lay out the streets and other infrastructure so that they consistently continue the City's system;
 - (2) accept or dedicate property for streets or any other public purpose; and
 - (3) plat the district accordingly; and
- (b) except as prohibited by law, the City may acquire realty and extend infrastructure beyond the City's boundaries without designating a special district.