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## Legal settlement affirms Hayward move to district-based elections for Council

**HAYWARD, Calif.**, May 23, 2024— The City of Hayward announced on Tuesday the settlement of a lawsuit that commits Hayward to a system of elections for City Council whereby all Council members except the City's mayor will be elected from geographic districts rather than through at-large citywide contests.

Under the settlement agreement, the change will take full effect starting in November 2026 when two of six non-mayoral seats on Hayward's seven-member Council will be up for election followed by the remaining four non-mayoral seats in November 2028. Elections for mayor will remain at-large.

Once in effect, the change means voters will cast ballots to elect only their district Councilmember and for mayor rather than to fill all Council seats.

The court-approved settlement brings to a close a lawsuit brought under the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) on behalf of Hayward resident Jack Wu and Neighborhood Elections Now, Inc. The lawsuit asserted that Hayward's at-large election system for Council unlawfully dilutes the voting power of Asian Americans. As part of the settlement, the City will pay Wu and Neighborhood Elections Now \$125,000 toward to reimburse attorney fees and litigation expenses.

The City Council initiated the move to district elections on April 16 when it passed a resolution directing City staff to begin a process provided for under the CVRA for drawing district-election maps for Council. A similar process is underway at Hayward Unified School District for school Board of Trustee elections.

A second of at least four public hearings on the drawing of Hayward City Council districts is scheduled to take place starting at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 28, in City Council Chambers at Hayward City Hall, 777 B Street. The first public hearing was held Tuesday, May 14, a recording of which is available [here](#).

Under the [settlement agreement](#), legislation establishing Hayward's six Council districts must be adopted by Oct. 14. The legislation also will establish which district seats will come up for election commencing in 2026 and which will start in 2028. If a vacancy occurs in an at-large non-mayoral Council seat prior to the completion of its term, the process for filling the vacancy would be determined jointly by parties to the lawsuit or by the court. Under the district-based election system, the elected terms of Councilmembers and the at-large-elected Mayor will remain at four years.

To provide information about Hayward's move to district-based elections and facilitate community input and participation in the map-drawing process, the City has established a website with map-drawing tools and other resources at [www.MapHayward.org](http://www.MapHayward.org).

All public hearings on the map-drawing process will be hybrid in format allowing for in-person and online attendance on the Zoom platform and will be broadcast and streamed on Hayward cable TV channel 15, on the City's [YouTube channel](#) and through the City's website, [www.hayward-ca.gov](http://www.hayward-ca.gov).

Questions, comments and other input, including proposed Council district map configurations, can be submitted by email to [districting@hayward-ca.gov](mailto:districting@hayward-ca.gov) or by calling (510) 583-4444.