



Sandy City Council Office

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MEMORANDUM

July 2, 2026

To: City Council Members

CC: Monica Zoltanski, Mayor
Brian Kelley, Administrative Services Director
Lynn Pace, City Attorney

From: Brooke Christensen, Council District One

Subject: First Reading: Proposal to Initiate Redistricting and Council Restructuring

Summary

The purpose of this memo is to formally propose that the City Council begin the process of redistricting and restructuring our current legislative body. Currently, our council is composed of four district-based seats and three at-large seats. I am proposing that we transition to a seven-district model, effectively phasing out at-large seats in favor of direct neighborhood representation.

The Proposal

As our city continues to grow and evolve, it is essential that our representation model reflects the unique needs of our diverse neighborhoods. I recommend we direct staff to begin the research and public engagement process necessary to:

- Redraw council boundaries to create seven distinct districts of approximately equal population.
- Transition at-large seats to district seats to ensure every resident has a local representative who is intimately familiar with their specific area of the city.

Advantages of a District-Based Model

Transitioning to a seven-district structure offers several key benefits for our constituents and the long-term governance of the city:

- **Localization:** When a council member represents a specific geographic area, residents know exactly who to contact regarding neighborhood issues like rezoning, development, and neighborhood safety. This creates a more local understanding that can sometimes be diluted in an at-large system.
- **Increased Accessibility for Candidates:** Running a city-wide campaign is often prohibitively expensive and time-consuming. By moving to smaller districts, we lower the barrier to entry for residents who wish to serve, as they can focus their outreach on their immediate community. This encourages a more diverse pool of candidates and perspectives.

- **Granular Representation:** Each area of our city faces unique challenges—whether it is managing growth near the Cairns, traffic, canyons issues, or preserving the individual character of each of our neighborhoods. Seven districts allow for more nuanced advocacy for these localized needs.
- **Improved Constituent Service:** With smaller constituent groups, council members can provide more localized service, ensuring that no neighborhood feels overlooked by city hall.
- **Improved Land Use and Infrastructure Advocacy:** District representatives may better understand:
 - Transportation bottlenecks
 - School impacts
 - Neighborhood redevelopment concerns
 - Park and trail needs
 - Public safety concerns unique to their area

This can improve long-range capital planning and neighborhood-level decision making.

Disadvantages of a District-Based Model:

- Transitioning from the status quo
- Residents not having a secondary council member (At Large) to look to for help

Next Steps

I recognize that a shift of this magnitude requires careful planning, legal review, and, most importantly, robust public input. I propose that we add a work session to an upcoming agenda in order to discuss and finalize a timeline (see Exhibit “A”) for this process. During the work session I would like to:

- Conduct a review of current population data and census tracts (GIS Team)
- Have legal counsel provide us with a synopsis of the Utah Municipal Code requirements and process for redistricting (Legal Team)
- Hold a discussion regarding how best to restructure our district and at-large council seats (Council)
- Set a timeline for redistricting

I look forward to discussing how we can refine our representation to better serve the residents of our community.