RESOLUTION NO. 21-724

WHEREAS, the regular 2020 federal decennial census will be officially published and the census data for the State of Alabama, including the City of Huntsville, will be released no later than September 30, 2021 according to the U.S. Census Bureau; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the city of Huntsville is responsible for the drawing of districts for the City of Council and the Huntsville City Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, based on the 2020 federal decennial census data, the City’s current districts must be reviewed and altered, as determined necessary, in order to ensure compliance with the U.S. Constitution, the Voting Rights Act, and other applicable laws; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary, desirable, and in the public interest for the City to establish guidelines which will direct and govern the City’s efforts in regard to the redistricting process and encourage and facilitate public participation in this endeavor; and

WHEREAS, the Guidelines for Redistricting of City Council and School Board Districts for the City of Huntsville, Alabama (hereinafter "Guidelines"), attached hereto as Exhibit A, have been prepared to carry out the objectives of this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with these Guidelines and in order to encourage and facilitate public participation in the redistricting process, it is necessary to call a number of special sessions in order to conduct public hearings for this redistricting process.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, as follows:

The Guidelines for Redistricting of Districts for the City of Huntsville, Alabama, attached hereto as Exhibit A, are adopted by the City Council as the guidelines which will direct and govern the City's redistricting efforts.

Special Sessions for the purpose of conducting public hearings, as further described in the Guidelines herewith adopted, are called and scheduled for the following dates:
RESOLUTION NO. 21-724

Thursday, October 14th, 5:30PM - City staff will introduce the Mayor’s plan to City Council at regular meeting.

Tuesday, October 19th, 4:00PM

Monday, October 25th, 5:30PM

Tuesday, November 9th, 1:30PM

Tuesday, November 16th, 4:00PM

Monday, November 22nd, 5:30PM

Thursday, December 2nd, 5:30PM - Final redistricting plans introduced by ordinance at regular meeting.

Thursday, December 16th, 5:30PM - Council adoption of final redistricting plan at regular meeting.

Each hearing will be held in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of the Municipal Building at 308 Fountain Circle and transcripts shall be made of each of these proceedings.

ADOPTED this the 12th day of August, 2021.

[Signature]
President of the City Council of the City of Huntsville, Alabama

APPROVED this the 12th day of August, 2021.

[Signature]
Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama
EXHIBIT A
GUIDELINES FOR REDISTRICTING OF
CITY COUNCIL AND SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICTS
FOR THE CITY OF HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

I. Council Meetings and Public Hearings

Pursuant to Alabama law, all public hearings and meetings of the Council in regard to redistricting will be open to the public and all redistricting plans presented at Council meetings will be made available to the public.

Transcripts of all public hearings and meetings of the Council in regard to redistricting shall be made and maintained as part of the public records. Copies of all transcripts shall be made available to the public.

In order to actively seek public participation and maximize public input, the Council will hold five (5) public hearings starting in October and continuing through the end of November. These public hearings will focus on obtaining general concerns and comments from the public regarding current districts, characteristics desired to be changed or left unchanged, the locations of neighborhoods and communities of interest, criteria for public submission of plans, and any other general concerns of the public which should be considered by the Council in adoption of a redistricting plan. In addition, the public hearings will focus on the presentation of plans by the public for Council consideration. The final plan(s) including any amendments to previously submitted plans as a result of city staff analysis will be introduced either by city staff or the public on December 2, 2021.

The dates and times established for public hearings related to the City's redistricting efforts are listed below. All public hearings will be held in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of the Municipal Building at 308 Fountain Circle.

Thursday, October 14th, 5:30PM- City staff will introduce the Mayor’s plan to City Council at regular meeting.

Tuesday, October 19th, 4:00PM

Monday, October 25th, 5:30PM

Tuesday, November 9th, 1:30PM

Tuesday, November 16th, 4:00PM

Monday, November 22nd, 5:30PM

Thursday, December 2nd, 5:30PM- Final redistricting plans introduced by ordinance at regular meeting.
Thursday, December 16th, 5:30PM- Council adoption of final redistricting plan at regular meeting.

All interested persons are encouraged to appear before the Council and give their comments regarding the redistricting of City districts. Reasonable opportunity will be given to such persons, consistent with reasonable time limitations and the criteria herein established, to provide input and present plans for the redistricting of such seats, unless such plans or subsequent amendments fail to meet the minimally accepted criteria herein established. Final plan(s) will be presented on December 2, 2021. The city staff will present the final plan(s) to be voted on by the Council. Any individual citizen, group or organization may also present a final plan at this meeting. At their next regular meeting on December 16, 2021, the Huntsville City Council will adopt a final plan.

Notices of all public hearings will be published in a newspaper of general circulation and posted on the first floor of the Municipal Building, on the City’s website at HuntsvilleAL.gov, and on HSV TV on Comcast channel 16 and 1088 and on Knology Channel 42. Individual notices of public hearings will be transmitted to any citizen, group or organization making a request for such notice from the City of Huntsville Planning Department.

City staff will attend each council member’s town hall meeting during the months of August 2021 through October 2021 to provide educational information on the redistricting process and request input from the public to be considered when drawing the redistricting plan.

II. Public Access

The City seeks active and informed public participation in all activities relating to redistricting with a wide range of public information and citizen input in the redistricting process.

The City will offer a free online redistricting preparation software with necessary census data and districts through the City of Huntsville website for any person, group or organization wishing to create and submit their own plan(s). The website can be accessed by visiting https://www.huntsvilleal.gov/redistricting. If unable to use available software applications, a city staff member(s) will be available to assist in creating a proposed plan, by appointment only. If software other than what is provided by the City of Huntsville is used to create a plan, a shape file of the proposed districts may be requested or download from https://maps.huntsvilleal.gov/datadeport.

The City of Huntsville Planning Department and GIS Department will assist any person, group or organization seeking to submit a proposed redistricting plan. Any person, group or organization may submit data of a proposed plan meeting the criteria established herein, and a staff member will generate a computer map and print out the plan which will include all pertinent data. Please contact the Planning Department at 256-427-5100 to schedule an appointment.
A redistricting plan by any individual citizen, group or organization must be presented to the Council by written presentation at a public hearing, no later than November 22nd. An oral presentation may also accompany the written presentation. All plans submitted to the Council will be made a part of the public record and made available in the same manner as other public records.

Any redistricting plan developed by an individual citizen, group or organization which is presented to the Council must:

a. be clearly depicted on maps which follow 2020 census geographic boundaries (showing Census block groups and blocks in the City of Huntsville) and include all land annexed into the City from January 1, 2020 through the annexation cut-off date, which will be established at a later time.

b. be accompanied by a statistical sheet listing:
   i. total population and voting age population of each proposed district;
   ii. deviation from Ideal District Population for each proposed district, stated as a percentage and number of persons;
   iii. minority populations and voting age minority populations of each proposed district;
   iv. a listing of the census geography (i.e., block groups and/or blocks) and parcels of annexed land making up each proposed district.

c. stand as a complete city-wide plan or, if presenting a partial plan as an amendment, fit back into the plan which is being amended, so that the proposal can be evaluated on a city-wide basis (i.e., all places of geography within the City must be accounted for in the plan when reviewed in its entirety).

d. must comply with the policies adopted by the Council and contain a detailed explanation of the manner that such compliance is achieved on a city-wide basis, with said explanation to be provided on a policy-by-policy basis.

Any proposed redistricting plan, to be formally considered for adoption, must be properly placed on a Council agenda.

III. Rational Municipal Policies for Development of Districts

1. The City of Huntsville shall be divided into five (5) single-member council districts and five (5) single member school board districts. The five (5) single member school board districts must be identical to the five (5) single-member council districts for the City.
2. Pursuant to the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, districts will be drawn to achieve "substantial equality of population among the various districts".

   a. Minimizing population deviation among districts should be established as high priority in the drawing of districts. Ideal District Population, which means all districts would have equal population as determined by dividing the number of districts into the total population of the City, should be the goal.

   b. Generally, deviations from the Ideal District Population should be justifiable either as a result of the limitations of census geography or as a result of the promotion of a rational municipal policy.

   c. The relative population deviation for any one single-member district should not exceed plus or minus five percent (+/- 5%) and ideally strive to reach as close to an equal population as possible.

   d. Any individual or organization submitting a proposed redistricting plan must submit a detailed explanation of how the deviations in the proposed plan further rational municipal policies or are necessitated by census geography.

3. All districts will be composed of contiguous and, to the extent reasonably possible, compact territory, using the center lines of streets or alleys, or other well-defined natural or manmade landmarks as boundaries.

4. The integrity of neighborhoods and communities of interest will be respected when possible. For purposes of these Guidelines, a community of interest is defined as an area with recognized similarities of interest, including, without limitation, geographic, governmental, regional, social, cultural, racial, ethnic, or historic interests. It is inevitable that some neighborhoods and interests will be recognized, and others will not be recognized; however, proposed redistricting plans should attempt to accommodate and preserve neighborhoods and communities of interest.

5. Proposed redistricting plans should respect the cores of existing districts, maintaining districts previously drawn to the extent possible.

6. District boundaries in proposed redistricting plans should ideally follow census block/block group geography (or city limit boundaries where annexations have occurred since January 1, 2020) in order to maintain the integrity of statistical analysis. Where Census boundaries cannot be followed, district boundaries can follow local voting precinct boundaries.
7. Proposed redistricting plans should avoid drawing City Council and City School Board incumbents out of their existing district and creating contests between incumbents where possible.

8. Criteria based upon race will be considered only to the extent required to comply with the Voting Rights Act.

9. Proposed redistricting plans are subject to the provisions of the Voting Rights Act and must not have the purpose or effect of: (a) denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color or because a person is a member of a language minority group, or (b) impeding the opportunities of minority groups protected by the Act to participate in the political process and elect representatives of their choice on an equal basis with other voters.

10. Proposed redistricting plans requiring less change to current districts in order to balance population and comply with the criteria set forth herein will be generally preferred over plans which require more change to achieve such balance and compliance, so long as other rational municipal policies are not jeopardized.

IV. Availability of Census Data and Redistricting Materials

On or before September 30, 2021 the following materials will be made available to the public by the City of Huntsville:

a. Data will be available for download at https://maps.huntsvilleal.gov/datadepot or hard copy maps can be obtained from the GIS Department

   (1) Huntsville city limits as they exist at this time,
   (2) City Council district boundaries as they exist at this time,
   (3) School Board district boundaries as they exist at this time,
   (4) Boundaries of areas within the City which are monitored by community watch groups and boundaries of civic associations which have responded to a request for boundary information;
   (5) 2020 census block (TIGER/Line) maps with PL Law 94-171 census data
   (6) Location of Annexations made by the City between January 1, 2020 and Sept. 30, 2021.

b. Data available for download https://maps.huntsvilleal.gov/datadepot or hard copies can be obtained from the City Clerk/Treasurer’s Office:

   (1) Ord. 11-604, the current district plan, adopted by City Council in September 2011;
(2) Annexations (and de-annexations) made by the City between January 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021, including population changes (with racial breakdowns) resulting from each such action;

(3) Addresses of incumbent members of the City Council and City School Board.

(4) Election results for City elections and City School Board elections held in 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020; and

(5) Legal descriptions of current voting precincts.

Hard copies of the materials listed above will be available per item or as a packet, in the City Clerk/Treasurer's Office, located on the third floor of the Municipal Building at 308 Fountain Circle. Fees for items or packets shall be based on printing costs, copying costs and costs of using other necessary resources. Hard copy maps of GIS data may be obtained from the GIS Department by request.

The City will offer a free online preparation software for any person, group or organization wishing to create and submit their own plans at https://www.huntsvilleal.gov/redistricting. A member of the staff will be available for assistance, by appointment only. Please contact the Planning Department at 256-427-5100 to schedule an appointment.

The materials listed above are suggested for use in the analysis for redistricting of the City’s districts. At this time, it is anticipated that additional information may be needed to account for: (1) the concerns and comments raised by the public at hearings and (2) additional annexations made by the City after the availability date of the public packet until the cut-off date which will be established at a later time. Updated information regarding additional annexations will be available in the Planning Department. Persons interested in submitting their own plans are encouraged to attend all public hearings so that they can incorporate the concerns expressed by the public. Transcripts of public hearing will also be made available. Other additional information may be deemed necessary at a later time.

Other potential sources for redistricting data are listed in Appendix I.

APPENDIX I

OTHER SOURCES OF REDISTRICTING DATA

Census data may be available at the following locations. Please note that computer software is required to run census data obtained from the following sources and will not be provided by the City.
1. U. S. Census Bureau
   4600 Silver Hill Road
   Washington, DC 20233
   Telephone: 301-763-4636 or 1-800-923-8282
   Website: http://census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/-census/about/rdo/program-management

   Census 2020 Tiger Line Redistricting County Block Maps are available on the U.S. Census Bureau's website. The boundaries shown on these maps are counties, minor civil divisions, census county divisions, incorporated places, census designated places, American Indian/Alaska Native/Hawaiian Home Land areas, census tracts, voting districts, block groups, and blocks.

   Census 2020 PL 94-171 files will be available for download from the U. S. Census Bureau website. Special database software may be required to view them properly. The City of Huntsville will not furnish such software.

   Census tract level race data is available on the Census Bureau's American Fact Finder at data.census.gov.

2. Alabama State Data Center
   The University of Alabama
   P.O. Box 870221
   Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
   Telephone: 205-348-6191
   http://cber.culverhouse.ua.edu/Alabama-state-data-center
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER MEMO
Agenda Item Number: 15.o.
Meeting Type: City Council Regular Meeting  Meeting Date: 8/12/2021
Type of Action: Approval/Action  Agenda Type: CITY COUNCIL

Subject:
Resolution adopting guidelines for redistricting of City Council and School Board Districts. (Planning)

Account Number:

City Obligation Amount:

Total Project Budget:

Other Comments:
These guidelines will direct and govern the City's redistricting efforts following the release of 2020 census data.

Grant Funded:

Grant Name - Resolution #:

Resolution #:
21-724

ATTACHMENTS:
- Description
- Resolution/Exhibit A
- Redistricting Guidelines