



NEWS RELEASE
July 10, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sarah Bunting, City Clerk, districtelections@cityoflivermore.net

CITY OF LIVERMORE TRANSITION FROM AT-LARGE TO DISTRICT-BASED ELECTIONS

Livermore, CA – On July 9, 2018, the Livermore City Council initiated the process to transition from an at-large to district-based election system to comply with the California Voting Rights Act. The City Council made the decision after it received a pre-lawsuit letter threatening to sue the City because its at-large electoral system allegedly violates the Act.

Cities throughout California are facing similar legal challenges to their at-large election systems. Most cities voluntarily shift to district-based elections when they receive the pre-lawsuit letters. The few cities that have defended their at-large election systems ultimately adopted district-based elections voluntarily or have been forced to adopt district based elections by the courts. Courts have consistently ruled that the Voting Rights Act is constitutional, and no city has successfully defended itself against an alleged violation. To help insulate cities from litigation costs, the state legislature recently created a safe harbor that limits the attorney's fees a city must pay if it makes a voluntary transition within a short period of time.

The City of Livermore currently uses an at-large election system that allows all voters in the City to elect council members and the mayor. In a district-based election system, the City is physically divided into separate council member districts, and the voters that live within each district get to elect a candidate from that district. The number and make-up of the council member voting districts will be decided by the Livermore City Council after a series of public hearings held over the next few months. The Mayor will continue to be elected at-large.

The first two public hearings will give the Livermore community an opportunity to weigh in on the composition of the districts. The two subsequent public hearings will give the community an opportunity to provide input on the draft maps for the district boundaries. At the final public hearing, the City Council will vote to consider an ordinance

establishing the districts and shifting to a district-based election system that will start with the 2020 election.

The first public hearing will be held on Monday, July 23, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. The hearing will be on the City Council's regular meeting agenda for that evening.

The City of Livermore has established a district elections webpage (<http://www.cityoflivermore.net/districtelections>) to provide information regarding the boundary drawing and transition process. Residents may submit comments via email to districtelections@cityoflivermore.net. All Council meetings are televised on Tri-Valley Community Television, operating on Comcast channel 29; AT&T U-Verse channel 99; and streamed online at <http://tri-valleytv.org/city-livermore.html>.

Additional information can be found at these sources:

<http://www.cityoflivermore.net/agenda>

<http://www.cityoflivermore.net/districtelections>

###

About the City of Livermore

Incorporated in 1876, the City of Livermore (www.cityoflivermore.net) is the easternmost city in the San Francisco Bay Area. With just over 83,000 residents, Livermore's heritage is an eclectic blend of wine-making, cattle ranching and agriculture, cultural arts, and cutting edge technology. The city's renowned reputation in science, technology and innovation is showcased at Sandia National Laboratories and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory which has been internationally recognized for its work in discovering Element 116 on the Periodic Table – Livermorium. The San Francisco Premium Outlets on Interstate-580 and the city's award-winning downtown provide a wide range of shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

#