

New Orleans City Council District D Redistricting Meeting
April 19, 2011

The first of two City Council District D community meetings on Redistricting was held on April 19, 2011 at Gentilly Presbyterian Church from 6 - 7:30 PM. Data from the 2010 U. S. Census indicates that District D is one of two districts that must increase in size to reach the ideal population based on post-Katrina citywide numbers.

District D Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell opened the meeting by stating that it is important for the community to provide input in redrawing the lines for District D. According to Census Data, the district must grow by some 10,413 residents. Redistricting LLC provided a timeline for the public input process, as well as information on redrawing the lines. Their presentation also included information on the legal requirements the council must fulfill, as well as the traditional redistricting principles and timeline for adopting the redistricting plan.

A variety of concerns from residents were brought forth at the meeting. Some residents requested that the information be provided in more resident-friendly terminology that referenced street and not directional boundaries, and maps that provide street names and population count. Other residents who attended the meeting expressed distrust with the process and felt that their input would not be considered, while others wanted to secure the pre-Katrina population information. Several residents provided comments on their neighborhood configuration and expressed a strong desire for it to remain the same type of neighborhood after redistricting occurs.

Council Vice President and At-Large Member, Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson also attended the meeting and provided insight on the steps that will follow the district community meetings. She stated that there will be committee meetings in the council chambers that will continue the dialogue and further engage community input.

I will be attending several neighborhood association meetings with the district D maps for continued community input, said Councilmember Hedge-Morrell. She stated that all information submitted as the final redistricting for all districts would have to be approved by the Justice Department.

The council deadline for adopting a Redistricting plan is targeted for August 2011.