



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Charlie Dissell, Community and Economic Development Director  
**Date:** December 6, 2021  
**Subject:** Chapter 3 Amendment

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## Introduction:

**Background:** As you may be aware, after a federal decennial census, each City Council must review its precinct and ward boundaries to see whether the existing boundaries comply with current laws. The results of the 2020 Census show that the City of Indianola's population grew to 15,833, up 7.1% from the 2010 Census. As such, the City's ward and precinct boundaries need to be amended. Finalized precinct boundary plans must be submitted electronically to the Iowa Secretary of State no later than 60 days after legislative districts have become law or by September 1, 2021, whichever is later. On Thursday, November 4, 2021, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds signed Iowa's new congressional and legislative boundaries into law. As such, the City has until Monday, January 3, 2022 to submit finalized plans to the Iowa Secretary of State. Cities are encouraged to submit plans early, allowing time to make corrections if necessary. Any plans that are not approved by the submission deadline that are determined to need corrections will be corrected by SOS, and cities will be assessed the costs of making those corrections.

## Discussion:

### Wards

Currently, the City is divided into four (4) wards. Wards must meet the following requirements:

- Wards must follow precinct boundaries
- Wards must be composed of contiguous territory
- Wards must be as compact as possible.
- Ward populations must be as close as possible to the Ideal Ward Population unless it is necessary to deviate in order to comply with other standards in Iowa Code. As the population of the City is 15,833, the ideal ward population is 3,958.

The following items cannot be taken into consideration when drawing ward boundaries:

- Addresses of incumbents
- Political affiliations of registered voters
- Past election results
- Other demographic information beyond census head counts

In order to meet the requirements listed above, staff does propose some minor changes to the

current ward boundaries. The proposed ward boundaries are attached to this agenda item. According to the Iowa Administrative Code, each city ward shall not have a population that exceeds the population of any other city ward by no more than 10 percent. In summary:

- Ward 1's proposed population is 3,938, which is 20 less than the ideal population, and is 24.87% of the City's population.
- Ward 2's proposed population is 3,960, which is 2 more than the ideal population, and is 25.01% of the City's population.
- Ward 3's proposed population is 3,997, which is 33 more than the ideal population, and is 25.21% of the City's population.
- Ward 4's proposed population is 3,944, which is 14 less than the ideal population, and is 24.91% of the City's population.

### **Precincts**

As the City's population exceeds 3,500, the City Council shall divide the City into precincts. Currently, the City is divided into seven (7) precincts. When drawing precinct boundaries, the following considerations shall be made:

- Precinct population cannot exceed 3,500.
- Precincts must lie within one legislative district.
- Precincts must be composed of contiguous territory.
- Precincts boundaries must follow census block boundaries.
- Precinct boundaries must be drawn to best serve the convenience of voters while promoting electoral efficiency. The convenience of voters means the precinct boundaries are easy to describe and identify and provide voters with relatively direct routes of travel to polling places. Electoral efficiency means reducing election costs by only creating as many precincts as necessary.
- Territory annexed after January 1, 2020, must be included when drawing precincts.

With these criteria, and because each ward is over 3,500, each ward is required to have two (2) precincts, which would require the addition of an 8th precinct for Indianola. The proposed precinct boundaries are attached to this agenda item.

### **County Auditor Review**

Before the final adoption of precinct boundaries, the county auditor must have the opportunity to review the city council's plan and provide written comments on the plan. The auditor may suggest changes to improve how the plan will serve the convenience of the voters or promote electoral efficiency. The council must allow the county auditor between seven and 10 days to provide written feedback. The proposed boundaries were sent to the County Auditors office on October 26, 2021. No written comments have been received from the County Auditor.

### **Budget Impact:**

### **Recommendation:**

- Attachments:**
1. 2021 City Instructions\_Reprecincting
  2. Reprecincting Worksheet
  3. Proposed Indianola Wards

4. Proposed Indianola Precincts
5. Current Indianola Precinct and Ward Map