

Redistricting

The Dane County Experience:
1991, 2001, 2011

Redistricting Timeline

- **2020:** Decennial census occurs.
- **March 2021:** Census data is delivered to the state.
- **April 2021:** Last municipal elections are held in old districts.

Timeline continued

- **Mid-April 2021:** County receives census population block data and the reapportionment 60-day time clock begins.
- **April and May:** Redistricting issues are considered and resolved by county body responsible; alternative supervisory districts maps are prepared; meetings occur with local municipalities that may be split by districts.
- **May-June:** A public hearing is held on the tentative supervisory district plan and the county body responsible recommends a tentative plan to the County Board.
- **June 2021:** The County Board approves a tentative supervisory plan (required 60 days after receipt of the Census data, but no later than July 1, 2021).
- **June-July 2021:** Municipalities adjust ward boundaries and submit ward plans to the county (no later than August 1 and within 60 days after receipt of the tentative supervisory plan).
- **October 2021:** The county adopts final supervisory district plan and cities adopt aldermanic districts within 60 days of receipt of the municipal ward plans.

Timeline continued

- **December 2021:** Candidates may begin circulating nomination papers for county and municipal offices based on the new districts.
- **February and April 2022:** First county elections in new districts (primary and general elections).

Number of Districts

- Range is set by statute based on population
- Counties with population between 100,000 and 500,000 may have up to 47 members
- The range is 7 supervisors to 38 supervisors
- Considerations when choosing the number of districts: population, geography, board organization and functioning, electoral issues, cost of campaigns

Guiding Principles

- Representation: A Dane County supervisory district has a population of 13,191
- Small deviation in district size: stay true to the goal of one person/one vote. If there is deviation, there should be a reason for it
- Communities of interest: The past redistricting cycles have worked to keep communities of interest together

1991

- The Dane County Regional Planning Commission oversaw the process and recommended a plan to the board.
- Number of supervisors dropped from 41 to 39
- Districts within Madison were coterminous with City aldermanic districts.

2001

- The County Board created an advisory committee which advised the Executive Committee – 7 non-supervisors and 2 ex officio supervisor members
- County Board staff and RPC staff both drew maps
- The committee recommended to the Executive Committee, which forwarded a tentative plan to the Board with no recommendation
- The plan was vetoed and the override failed
- A new plan was drawn and approved.
- The number of districts decreased from 39 to 37; the linkage with the aldermanic districts was decoupled

2011

- A subcommittee of the Executive Committee oversaw the process, appointed by the Board Chair with 5 Board members and 2 citizen members, plus 2 ex-officio supervisors and 2 ex officio citizen members
- Staff support was by the County Board Office and the Land and Water Resources Department
- The number of districts remained 37
- Incumbency was specifically included as a guiding principle

Challenges for 2021

- Key questions will continue to be how to structure oversight and what is the best agency to produce the maps. Advances in technology will play a role in the ease of mapping.
- The number of supervisors needed to handle the workload will continue to be debated.