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For Immediate Release

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City of Wabasha City Council considers new wards on March 1st

The City of Wabasha City Council will be considering new ward boundaries in a process called redistricting at their Tuesday meeting on March 1st. They will also consider a proposal to create one central polling location at the Fire Station, instead of having three polling locations. This redistricting process happens every 10 years after the decennial census, and is necessary to follow state statute, which says, “Wards shall be as equal in population as practicable, and each ward shall be composed of a compact, contiguous territory.”

“Overall, the City of Wabasha only grew by 38 people, so the population stayed about the same but where people lived changed, said Caroline Gregerson, City Administrator. “Our downtown population grew (Ward 1), and the west-side of Wabasha (Ward 3) declined in population, so this required new wards to be drawn,” said Caroline Gregerson, City Administrator.

The task was to ensure each ward had about 850-856 in population. The Census showed that Ward 1 was at about 995 people, so needed less population. Ward 2 was at 828 (east-side), Ward 3 was at 736 (west-side), so both Wards needed additional population.

The resulting proposed maps are that Ward 3 now includes south of 5th Grant Boulevard (Phelps Avenue and Rocque Avenue to the Soo Line Railroad) and from Hiawatha Drive East to 12th Street and West from Franklin Avenue to the Slough.



West Side Location Ward 1 to Ward 3

Proposed location is South of 5th Grant Blvd including Phelps Ave & Rocque Ave to the Soo Line Railroad

Includes Blocks 111, 112, 127, 128, 129 & 148 of Wabasha Plat

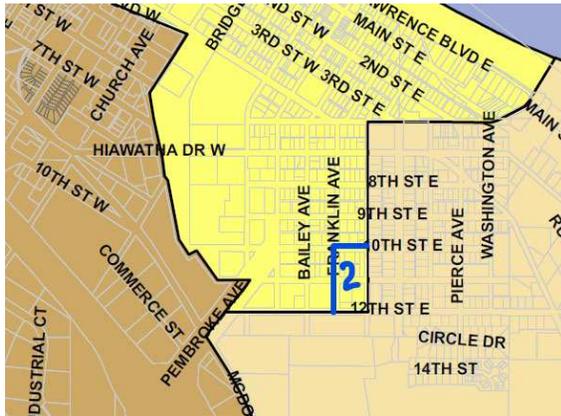


Second proposed location is changing Ward 1 to Ward 3. Running from Hiawatha Drive East to 12th Street and West from Franklin Ave to the Slough.

Locations include blocks:

15, 16, 17, 18, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 55, 56, 57, 65, & 66 in South Wabasha Plat

Then, Ward 2 gets additional population, from Ward 1, from Franklin Avenue, running East between 10th Street and 12th Street.



With these changes, the Wards would have a more equal population count, as follows:

Ward 1- 856, Ward 2- 850, Ward 3- 853

“Since this is done only every 10 years, it was not an easy process to figure out how to make this work. After a few revisions though, we finally reached a proposal that meets the State’s requirements of having Wards both contiguous and nearly equal in population,” said Wendy Busch, City Clerk.

Finally, the proposal before City Council on Tuesday also makes the recommendation that all three Wards now vote in one location, at the Wabasha Fire Station, versus three separate locations, as was previously (City Hall, Maple Grove Apartments, Fire Station). Ward 3 was moved from Maple Grove Apartments, in 2020 to the Fire Station, due to Covid and staff discovered it worked so well, that now the City is proposing to move all three.

“When the polling location change was made in 2020, I found that it was much more efficient in terms of staff time and resources. Given the changes, we can also help citizens know which Ward they are voting in and reduces the likelihood that they show up to the wrong polling location.” said Wendy Busch, City Clerk.

The next step is hearing from residents. Affected residents may submit written comments to clerk@wabasha.org or contact their Council Member. They may also speak during the public comment period at Tuesday’s Council meeting.

The final step will be submitting the new boundaries to the Secretary of State no later than March 29, 2022. Once the boundaries are received by the Secretary of State they will become official on August 9, 2022, the date of the State's first primary election.