

# City of Salisbury



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PRESS RELEASE



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## Mayor Proposes Bold Changes for Salisbury Redistricting

“The results of the 2010 census will force the City to redraw the boundaries of our current City Council election districts. I propose that we take this opportunity to make a bold change to our electoral system. The population of Salisbury has grown to 30,607 citizens over the past 10 years and the minority citizens of the city now make up 44% of our population. There are three (3) options that I am putting before the council for consideration. The first proposal divides the city into five (5) council districts. The second proposes five (5) council districts and two (2) city-wide at-large council seats, which expands the number of council members to seven (7). The third proposal keeps the two (2) city election districts we presently have and expands district 1 in order to ensure that the district contains approximately 20% of the City’s population and that a majority of the population in this district are minorities as required by the 1988 consent decree,” said Mayor Ireton.

### Each Plan: A Brief Synopsis

**Plan 1** – Plan 1 divides the city into five (5) election districts, two (2) of which are minority-majority. I propose that we retain our four (4) year staggered term system if we adopt this plan. The transition schedule for this plan would be as follows:

Candidates vying for the two open Council seats in 2013 would run for two (2) year terms ending in 2015. The Mayor would run for a four-year term. In 2015, the conversion to the five (5) district system would take place. Candidates vying for two (2) of the seats would run for two (2) year terms, in order to establish a staggered term system. The other three seats would have four year terms beginning in 2015. In 2017, the Mayor and candidates for the two (2) seats in which terms expire in 2017 would run for four year terms.

Cost: In 2015, the cost of this plan will be approximately \$75,000 because we will utilize five (5) polling places. In elections after that, the cost will vary between \$62,000 and \$75,000 depending on whether there are elections in three (3) districts or whether there is a city-wide Mayoral election.

**Plan 2** – Plan 2 divides the city into five (5) election districts, two (2) of which are minority-majority, and creates two (2) at-large seats, expanding the city council to seven (7) members. This plan allows all city voters to go to the polls in every city election and it stands to close the disparity of the number of overall votes that minorities have in electing representatives (5:2 ratio). The transition schedule for this plan would be as follows:

In 2013, candidates for the District 1 seat and the District 2 seat will run for two (2) year terms ending in 2015. The mayor will run for a 4 year term ending in 2017.

In 2015, the conversion to the five (5) District 2 seats and the two (2) at-large seats will occur. The candidates running for the two (2) at-large seats will run for two (2) year terms so that their re-election cycle will coincide with the Mayors term, ending in 2017. Candidates for the five (5) council-manic districts will run for four (4) year terms ending in 2019.

In 2017, the mayor and the two (2) at-large seats will be up for election for four (4) year terms.

In 2019, the five district seats will be up for election for four (4) year terms.

Cost Approx. \$75,000 each election cycle beginning in 2015.

**Plan 3** – Plan 3 is the same as the current electoral system the city has now. The only change is an expansion of the District 1 boundaries so that the population of this district will again be 20% of the City population to reach the 20% mark.

Cost: The cost of this system will alternate between \$41,000 and \$62,000 depending on whether there is an election in District 2 or city wide. This is the same cost that we currently experience.

### Mayor Endorses Plan 2

“Plan 2 modernizes our election districts to reflect our evolution into a larger city and our increasing diversity. It allows every city voter the opportunity to vote in every city election that occurs and it provides an opportunity for every City voter to have a say in the election of four local representatives (mayor, two at-large Council members and one district council member). It honors the elections of all presently sitting city council members, and it localizes elections in our neighborhoods, which should increase participation. It is progressive in that it creates a second minority/ majority district which helps to close the disparity gap created by the current election system. Under this proposal, we could see a second African-American elected or the first Latino elected to council. Creating the two (2) at-large seats also provides for a city-wide perspective on Council. I highly recommend this plan as one that will serve the city well until the next census in 2020,” said Mayor Ireton.

#### Population Information

RACE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE of TOTAL POPULATION
<i>White</i>	<i>16,956</i>	<i>55.4</i>
<b>MINORITY POPULATION</b>		
<i>Black</i>	<i>10,657</i>	<i>34.8</i>
<i>American Indian and Alaska Native</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>0.2</i>
<i>Asian</i>	<i>965</i>	<i>3.1</i>
<i>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Less than one-tenth of one percent</i>
<i>Some Other Race</i>	<i>945</i>	<i>3.1</i>
<i>Two or More Races</i>	<i>982</i>	<i>3.2</i>
<b>TOTAL MINORITY POPULATION</b>	<b><i>13,651</i></b>	<b><i>44.6</i></b>
<b>HISPANIC or LATINO</b>	<b><i>2,128</i></b>	<b><i>7</i></b>

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