

REDISTRICTING ROADMAP

The MD19 Council of Governors directed by unanimous vote at the June 12, 2021 Council of Governors meeting that MD19 prepare a redistricting plan. So now what do we do?

What follows is a "roadmap" that outlines how the Multiple District and the existing Districts get from the Council's directive to the submission of a redistricting plan to Lions Clubs International, and then implementation of the plan once approved.

Before jumping into details, let's look at some history:

MD19 was born in 1922 as a single district, District 19, serving 8 Lions clubs in British Columbia, Oregon and Washington. Oregon was separated from District 19 (becoming District 36) in 1925. Northern Idaho was added to District 19 in 1936, and Alaska became part of District 19 in 1943 until it was moved to District 49 with the Northwest Territories. Since then there have been 5 major redistricting events in MD19:

District 19 became a Multiple District 19, during the 1947–1948 fiscal year when it reorganized into 5 sub–districts: Districts 19–A, 19–B, 19–C, 19–D and 19–E.

Districts 19–D and 19–E were reorganized into Districts 19–D, 19–E and 19–F during the 1950–1951 fiscal year.

District C was reorganized into Districts 19–C and 19–G in 1963-1964.

District 19–A was reorganized into Districts 19–A and 19–H in 1966–1967.

District 19–A and 19–H reorganized again in 1970–1971, creating District 19–I.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

The Council of Governors approved a redistricting plan based on a recommendation from the MD19 Strategic Planning Committee that the 9 current districts be consolidated into 5 districts. The outline of a proposed redistricting plan was first presented at the Winter Council of Governors meeting on February 6, 2021, and adopted at the Spring Council of Governors meeting on June 12, 2021.

WHAT IS THE PLAN?

The Strategic Planning Committee outlined a redistricting plan that:

Merges Districts A and I into a single district of 97 clubs, 14 zones and 2,071 members (tentatively dubbed District 19–L),

Merges Districts B and H into a single district of 76 clubs, 13 zones and 1,951 members (tentatively dubbed District 19–O),

Merges Districts C and G into a single district of 82 clubs, 11 zones and 2,345 members (tentatively dubbed District 19–N),

Merges zones E1, E3, E9 and E11 from District E into the current District F for a district of 64 clubs, 12 zones and 1,572 members (tentatively dubbed District 19–S), and

Merges zones E2, E4, E5, E6, E8 and E10 from District E into the current District D for a district of 72 clubs, 14 zones and 1,678 members (tentatively dubbed District 19–I).

More work needs to be done to complete the final "Plan", which will be addressed below.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS TO REDISTRICT?

There are several steps to approval of a final redistricting plan. Let's start at the end of the journey and work back to the present:

Implementation Of An Approved Plan— July 1, 2023

An approved redistricting plan takes effect on July 1 (technically, the close of the International convention) of the year following its approval by Lions Clubs International. For our purposes, assume that would be **July 1, 2023**— *this summary assumes an implementation date of July 1, 2023*, which is the earliest date a redistricting plan for MD19 could take effect.

LCI Approval— October, 2022

Redistricting plans have to be approved by the Lions Clubs International board of directors. The Board considers applications for redistricting only at their annual, October board meetings. Assume that would be **October 1, 2022**.

Application For LCI Approval Of Redistricting Plan— August 1, 2022

The application to approve a redistricting plan must be submitted to the Lions Clubs International board of directors at least 60 days before its October board meeting.

But, a redistricting plan can not be sent to LCI for approval unless it has first been approved by the Multiple District, which effectively means the earliest LCI can consider a plan would be October, 2022 (October, 2021 has come and gone).

Working backwards again, the deadline to submit a plan to Lions Clubs International is **August 1, 2022**.

MD19 Approval— May or June, 2022

The redistricting plan must be approved by a *majority vote* of MD19 delegates at a regular convention, or at special convention called for the purpose of voting on the plan, before it can be submitted to the LCI Board of Directors.

Based on the current MD19 convention schedule (annual conventions are in the fall— usually in October), a special convention will be necessary— the only regular MD19 convention between now and the October, 2022 LCI board meeting is the first week of November, 2021, which is too soon for the clubs and Lions of MD19 to study and consider a redistricting plan before voting on it.

Plan on a special MD19 convention in May or June, 2022.

Submission Of Plan To The Clubs— January 13, 2022

The plan must be submitted to the clubs at least 60 days before the convention at which the voting will take place to approve or reject the plan.

Assuming a May, 2022 convention, the plan needs to be in the clubs hands no later than March 1, 2022. *However...*

Districts Consideration Of Plan— March Through May, 2022

Although not required, the Strategic Planning Committee believes the redistricting plan should be submitted to the districts so the Districts and clubs can study the plan and, if the districts so choose, conduct an advisory vote.

The votes of the districts, whether to approve or reject the plan, will be submitted to Lions Clubs International as part of the package that comprises the redistricting application (assuming the plan is approved by the delegates to the MD19 special convention in May or June, 2022).

The 2022 District conferences are currently scheduled from the first week in March to the second week in May, 2022. In order to get a final plan to the districts 60 days before the start of spring conference season, it needs to be delivered to the clubs by **January 13, 2022**.

The MD19 Council of Governors needs to bless the “final plan”— the plan that will be submitted to the clubs and that the club delegates to the MD convention will vote on. That will occur after District Merger Committees (discussed below) have met and any modifications to the proposed plan have been considered and resolved by the affected districts, and critical implementation issues have been resolved.

The Strategic Planning Committee will draft the final plan after receiving input from the District Merger Committees. The goal is to finalize a plan that can be published by **January 13, 2021**.

Build The Final Plan— July, 2021 to January 1, 2022.

The redistricting plan is not “done”. The Strategic Planning Committee prepared a “what redistricting in MD19 might look like” outline for the June 12, 2021 Council of Governors meeting. That outline forms a basic “plan” that focuses on where zones can be located if the 9 current districts are consolidated into 5 districts. There are many other issues that need to be addressed before the basic plan becomes a final plan that meets the LCI requirements to redistrict.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

So what do we do now? How do we build the “final” plan?

Basically, the Districts need to make a number of decisions about how to transition from 9 to 5 districts.

Although it may seem counter-intuitive to work on transitioning to a plan that has not been (and might not be) approved, that work needs to be done now because: (1) once a redistricting plan is approved there will be little or no practical time for the districts to do so; (2) some of the redistricting requirements can only be decided by the affected districts, and; (3) how the transitions will occur are critical to the club’s decision-making about whether to approve or reject the final plan— the clubs need to know how redistricting will work in their districts so they can vote on it. *Districts need to plan ahead to July 1, 2023 assuming redistricting will be approved and will take effect July 1, 2023.*

Here are some suggestions:

Start With The Basics— The District Merger Committees

Appoint a Redistricting/Merger Committee for your district.

This can be anyone current district leadership wants. The size and configuration of the committee is up to each district.

Suggestion: Appoint a 3 to 5 person committee consisting of the IPDG, the 1st VDG and another PDG selected by the current, seated DG.

Establish the committee now, if it has not yet been done.

Send the names and contact information to the MD19 Executive Director, Peter Anderson, to be shared with each district and the Strategic Planning Committee.

Get Together And Talk— Inter-District Committee Meetings

Set up a schedule for the District committees to meet. At a minimum:

Districts A and I need to meet,

Districts B and H need to meet,

Districts C and G need to meet, and

Districts D, E and F need to meet.

Understand as well that the proposed districts could change as the final plan comes into focus and meeting with other districts may be necessary.

***Suggestion:** Schedule weekly committee meetings (Zoom, or whatever works) of the District Committees through September to get to a final plan, and then monthly meetings through June, 2023 for matters that may arise as an approved plan is implemented.*

Build A Plan Step 1— Tweaks To The Proposed Plan

Does the alignment of the “new” districts that is currently on the drawing board work? Is there a better way, or are there other options that would work better for your districts? For the Multiple District?

For example, instead of, say, merging Districts A and I, would it be better to move zone H4 into District A and zone H7 into District I? Should C and G merge or stay the way they are? Is there a better way to shuffle the zones in Districts D, E and F? Or...?

Let the Strategic Planning Committee know if you think something other than what is on the table would better serve your districts. What is important is what works with the districts, and the proposed plan can be modified if the affected districts agree among themselves that a different alignment will work or is acceptable to them. *Modification of the proposed plan is a matter for the District Merger Committees to negotiate and resolve—the Strategic Planning Committee is not an arbiter of who’s modifications to the proposed plan win and whose lose.*

The goal is to get the districts out of transitional status, and if districts agree to a better way than what the Strategic Planning Committee presented to the Council of Governors in June, the proposed plan will be modified to reflect those agreements so long as the meet the LCI redistricting requirements.

***Suggestion:** Don't be shy. Communicate suggested changes to the proposed realignment of the 9 districts into 5 districts to the districts that would be affected by the changes and Strategic Planning Committee, and negotiate agreements among the affected districts ASAP.*

Build A Plan Step 2— District Finances.

Determine how the district financial assets are to be divided up or allocated from the current districts into the “new” districts: Escrow accounts, district bank accounts or other financial assets?

Suggestion: Pro rate the financial assets based on what zones will be in which districts. For example, if 3 zones from a current district will be in new District I, and 5 zones from that district will be in new District S, allocate 3/8 of the district financial assets to District I and 5/8 to District S.

Build A Plan Step 3— District Constitutions, Bylaws And Policy Manuals

The “new” districts will need new governing documents— constitutions, bylaws, policy manuals. What is critical at this stage is to decide how those governing documents will be created and adopted. They can not be adopted by the “new” districts until the new district exists.

Suggestion: Adopt the LCI model constitution and bylaws— more accurately, agree to submit the LCI model district constitution and bylaws to the “new” district for adoption. Take on the details of how you want your “new” district to be governed and amend the governing documents later, after July, 2023.

Build A Plan Step 4—District Officers

There are several issues here, including:

- Who will be the DG, 1st VDG and 2nd VDG of the new districts for the 2023–2024 fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2023)? Who is eligible?
- What happens to the elected 1st VDG and 2nd VDG from each district on July 1, 2023?
- How are DGE's and VDGE's for the new districts to be selected? Who will be attending the DGE trainings for 2023–2024 officers?

Suggestion: This can be as simple as a coin-flip of the 2023–2024 DGEs coming in to the “new” districts. Or it can be as complicated as holding an election for the new district officers, essentially a run-off of the eligible candidates for each position from the clubs that will be in the “new” districts. Many districts that have gone through redistricting choose to alternate district officers for two or three cycles from the old districts—for example, whoever loses the coin-flip for DG becomes DG the following year, and so on. And, alternating the offices between the merging districts has been a popular redistricting option— the DG comes from one district, the 1st VDG from the other, and so on.

The complication is how to deal with the election of new officers for the “new” districts. Assuming redistricting is approved, there will not be elections for districts A through I at the 2023 conferences, but officers do need to be elected for the “new” districts. How do you provide a conference for a district that will not exist until July 1, 2023?

Suggestions: Hold advisory elections for the new districts during the regular, 2023 spring conferences, much like the election process for Council Chair and Vice Council Chair to MD19 has been held at the conferences the last few years.

Build A Plan Step 5— Leadership Teams

Who will be the GST, GLT, GMT and GMA champion for the 2023–2024 fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2023) and how will they be selected?

Suggestion: Agree to split up these positions, and all cabinet positions, between the merging districts so that the “new” district is not dominated by one group.

Build A Plan Step 6— Board And Society Representation

Every district has appointees to various boards, foundations and societies. For example, district representatives to the Northwest Lions Foundation, and those representatives serve multi–year terms. For the merging districts, which of these representatives will be serving 2023–2024 fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2023) and how will they be selected?

Suggestion: Agree to split up these positions, and all board, foundation and society positions, between the merging districts so that the “new” district is not dominated by one group and none of the “old” districts are left out.

Build A Plan Step 7— District Assets

How are the personal property assets of the districts to be divided up or allocated— projectors, computers, loudspeakers, banners, paraphernalia?

Suggestion: Pro rate the district assets based on what zones will be in which districts. For example, if 3 zones from a current district will be in new District I, and 5 zones from that district will be in new District S, allocate 3/8 of the district assets to District I and 5/8 to District S.

Build A Plan Step 8— Internet And Social Media

What about Zoom, GoTo Meeting accounts, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or websites? How are the “old” websites and social media accounts going to be taken off line and how will new ones be built to replace them?

Suggestion: Use your current webmasters, technology and social media coordinators and give them plenty of lead time to merge existing websites and social media accounts.

Build A Plan Step 9— Rename The Zones

Zones will need to have new names if the redistricting plan is approved— having 2 or 3 Zone 1’s in a district just doesn’t work very well.

Suggestion: Draw lots—put the new names in a hat and have the 2023–2024 incoming zone chairs draw a new name out of the hat. Have some fun— Make selection of new zone names an “event” at the 2023 spring conferences.

HOW DO YOU PAY FOR REDISTRICTING

There is not a lot of expense to redistricting, but there will be some (like—5 new district governor, 1st VDG, 2nd VDG and 14 new zone banners, for example).

Lions Clubs International currently lists a redistricting grant program to help cover redistricting costs. However, we have been advised by LCI that MD19’s districts are not eligible for redistricting grants because the program will sunset before MD19’s redistricting plan can be submitted to LCI for approval. We have also been advised that it is unlikely the program will be renewed.

Based on LCI’s most recent information, the Committee has removed the application and program description from the redistricting resources available to MD19 Lions.

For now, districts will have to rely on their escrow accounts, contributions, or projects to cover redistricting costs.

PROBLEMS, COMMUNICATION, CONTACTS

The above lists are not comprehensive. Your districts in general, and the District Committees in particular, may well find other issues that need to be addressed. So communicate. Feel free to contact any member of the Strategic Planning Committee with questions, comments, observations, suggestions. The committee will even keep your suggestions anonymous if you wish. But let us know what your districts are thinking and how MD19 can offer a redistricting plan that will best serve MD19’s Lions.