QUEENS, NY Proposed Council District Boundaries NYC Redistricting Commission Hearing May 26th, 2022

Prepared for: Queens Civic Congress

May 26th 2022

Executive Summary

The Queens Civic Congress (QCC), an umbrella organization representing more than 80 civic and homeowner associations – as well as working in tandem with other allied groups – throughout Queens County, promotes the stabilization and strengthening of our neighborhoods. While we focus on public safety, land use, transportation and other important aspects of life in the borough of Queens and New York City, QCC has weighed in on previous redistricting efforts during the past three decades. In addition, in 2012, many of the recommendations put forth by our Land Use Chair, Paul Graziano, – with significant input from our member associations – were ultimately adopted by that Redistricting Commission. Once again, the Land Use Chair has put together recommendations for the current. Commission to consider.

Our basic premise for redistricting in Queens is simple: of the 14 Council Districts wholly within Queens County, seven of the current Council Districts are below the bare minimum threshold of 168,559 while only two are above the maximum threshold of 177,203. In addition, the sole district split between Queens and Brooklyn – District 34 – is also under the minimum threshold. However, due to the extreme increase in population in neighboring District 33 – almost 40,000 additional people above the minimum threshold – this district will probably be more affected by redistribution in Brooklyn rather than Queens and thus is generally left out of this document except for identification purposes.

In addition, the current Council Districts drawn in 2012 are generally representative and divided cleanly between neighborhoods, with a few exceptions. Strong boundaries, whether a highway, major street, park or an actual well-defined neighborhood based upon association boundaries or prevailing zoning or housing types, are typical throughout the borough: some examples are the Long Island Expressway, used in eight Council Districts as a north-south boundary, and the Whitestone and Brooklyn-Queens expressways, each dividing several Council Districts; Flushing Meadows Park, which acts as an east-west boundary between four Council Districts; and other major boulevards and streets already considered neighborhood boundaries, such as Northern Boulevard, Jamaica Avenue and Atlantic Avenue. Other examples include keeping association and zoning areas whole, such as the Broadway-Flushing and Station Road Civic Association areas, both of which were initially proposed to be divided between two Council Districts in the first version of the 2012 Redistricting Commission's maps; after reexamination and upon further information to the Commission, the maps were later revised to keep both neighborhoods in their entirety in District 19, where they had previously been.

As such, the Queens Civic Congress is recommending that the Commission take a minimalist approach in terms of the current redistricting effort. Our organization, with input from our member associations, has identified areas where changes can and should be made, with minimal disruption to intact and concise neighborhood boundaries and demographic communities of interest.



The attached maps describe population within the current Council Districts, including the official numbers; the population above or below the thresholds; and the proposed map changes based on our recommendations. Districts that are below the minimum population threshold are shaded red; above the maximum population threshold are shaded blue; and within the population threshold are shaded yellow. However, based upon the fact that the majority of districts are below the minimum threshold, all population figures are based upon the minimum threshold figure (168,559) as the benchmark.

As can be seen in our proposal, the seven Council Districts below and two Council Districts above the thresholds are easily reallocated to adjacent districts. For example, District 26 is 15,395 above the minimum threshold; adjacent District 22 is 9,073 below the minimum threshold. Therefore, shifting blocks from the Astoria waterfront and South Astoria area from District 26 to 22 to the same southern boundary – 34th Avenue – as the rest of the district is an appropriate solution, creating minimal gerrymandering and respecting neighborhood boundaries.

Below is a District-by-District summary and boundary justification (with additional resources as necessary for purposes of illustration):

Council District 19 - Currently, Council District (CD) 19 is 843 below the minimum threshold, while Council District 20 is 3,227 above the minimum threshold. Within Queens County, CD 19 is connected by land only to CD 20 and CD 23. As CD 23 is 8,005 below the minimum threshold, we propose that two small areas are transferred from CD 20 to CD 19, based on defining neighborhood, zoning and physical characteristics, as the demographics are similar on both sides of the border. The remainder of the boundary between Districts 19 and 20 should remain as is, for the same reasons that they were created in the first place: major differences in land use (singlefamily zoning in CD 19, multi-family in CD 20, for example), long-established neighborhood and association boundaries (Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association, Station Road Civic Association, North Flushing Civic Association, Auburndale Improvement Association, Douglaston Civic Association, etc.). The two blocks in Whitestone (pop. 386) will incorporate the last section of detached one/two family R3A zoning into CD 19; the seven blocks in North Flushing (pop. 517) is part of the North Flushing Civic Association area and the remainder of the R2A zoning area not incorporated into CD 19. These two areas total an additional 903 residents, which would bring District 19 into compliance with 168,619, or 60 over the minimum threshold. The additional 903 residents represent an increase of .005 and will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 19.

Council District 20 – Currently, CD 20 is 3,227 above the minimum threshold, and is the only district in northeast Queens with population above the minimum threshold (CDs 19, 23 and 24 are all below the minimum threshold). In order to create the minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 20 transfer a total of 903 residents to CD 19 in two discrete areas of Whitestone and North Flushing (see CD 19 above); and a total of 2,305 residents to CD 23 in a single 25-block area of Auburndale. This would result in CD 20 having a total of 168,578 residents, or 19 over the minimum threshold. The resulting subtraction of 3,208 residents, or a decrease of .019, will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 20.



Council District 21 – Currently, CD 21 is 2,384 above the minimum threshold. In order to create the minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 21 transfer a total of 2,267 residents on five blocks to CD 25 in the Jackson Heights neighborhood. This area, primarily composed of six-story garden apartments, is primarily within the Jackson Heights Historic District; the vast majority of the Historic District lies within CD 25. This would result in CD 21 having a total of 168,676 residents, or 117 over the minimum threshold. The resulting subtraction of 2,267 residents, or a decrease of .013 and will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 21.

Council District 22 – Currently CD 22 is 9,073 below the minimum threshold, the largest deficit in Queens County. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 26 transfer population from two discrete areas north of 34th Avenue, which forms most of the boundary between CD 22 and CD 26: the first, a 15-block section of the Astoria waterfront with a total of 2,114 residents; the second, a 19-block section of southeastern Astoria north of Northern Boulevard with a total of 7,293 residents. This would result in CD 22 gaining a total of 9,407 residents, or 334 over the minimum threshold. This would result in CD 22 having a total of 168,893 residents, or 334 over the minimum threshold. The resulting addition of 9,407, or an increase of .056, will have a minor effect on the demographic profile, as the additional demographic mix closely tracks with the existing demographic profile of CD 22.

Council District 23 – Currently, CD 23 is 8,005 below the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 20 transfer a total of 2,305 residents in a single area of Auburndale (see CD 20 above); and CD 27 transfer population from two discrete areas: the first, a 3-block section of Queens Village with a total of 525 residents; the second, a 32-block section of on the Jamaica-Hollis border between Jamaica and Hillside avenues with a total population of 5,391. This would result in CD 23 having a total of 168,775 residents, or 216 over the minimum threshold. The resulting addition of 8,221, or an increase of .049, will have a minor effect on the demographic profile of CD 21, with a slight boosting of the Asian American population in an already Asian American-majority district.

Council District 24 – Currently, CD 24 is 2,697 below the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 27 transfer a 17-block area with a total population of 1,114 and CD 28 transfer an 11-block area with a total population of 1,724 – both areas located adjacent or near to the Long Island Railroad in Jamaica – to CD 24. This would result in CD 24 having a total of 168,700 residents, or 141 over the minimum threshold. The resulting addition of 2,838, or an increase of .017, will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 24.

Council District 25 – Currently CD 25 is 2,559 above the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 21 transfer a total of 2,267 residents on five blocks in the Jackson Heights neighborhood (see CD 21 above); and that CD 25 transfer a total of 4,521 residents on 16 blocks in the South Elmhurst neighborhood to CD 30. This transfer will bring a mostly one and two-family neighborhood with corresponding R4B zoning into the adjacent more compatible areas of Maspeth. This would result in CD 25 having a total of 168,864 residents, or 305 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall subtraction of 2,254, or .013, will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 25.

Council District 26 – Currently, CD 26 is 15,395 above the minimum threshold and 6,751 above the maximum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 26 transfer population from two discrete areas north of 34th Avenue, which forms most of the boundary between CD 22 and CD 26: the first, a 15-block section of the Astoria waterfront with a total of 2,114 residents; the second, a 19-block section of southeastern Astoria north of Northern Boulevard with a total of 7,293 residents (see CD 22 above). This would result in CD 26 having a total of 174,547 residents, or 5,988 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall subtraction of 9,407 residents, or a decrease of .051 and will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 26.

Council District 27 – Currently, CD 27 is 3,428 above the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 27 transfer population from two discrete areas to CD 23: the first, a 3-block section of Queens Village with a total of 525 residents; the second, a 32-block section of on the Jamaica-Hollis border between Jamaica and Hillside avenues with a total population of 5,391 (see CD 23 above). CD 27 should also transfer a 17-block area in Jamaica with a total population of 1,724 to CD 24 (see CD 24 above). To balance the losses from those three discrete areas, we propose that CD 28 transfer a 27-block area in South Jamaica, primarily composed of one/two-family detached houses, with a total population of 3,953 to CD 27. This would result in CD 27 having a total of 169,084 residents, or 525 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall subtraction of 2,903 residents, a decrease of .017, will have a minor effect on the demographic profile of CD 27, with a slight boost in the African American population in an already African American-majority district.

Council District 28 – Currently, CD 28 is 13,948 above the minimum threshold and 5,304 above the maximum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 28 transfer population to five discrete areas: the first, an 11-block area in Jamaica with a total population of 1,724 to CD 24 (see CD 24 above); the second, a 27-block area in South Jamaica, primarily composed of one and two-family detached houses, with a total population of 3,953 to CD 27 (see CD 27 above); the third, a 4-block area of Ozone Park with a total population of 1,386 to CD 32; and the fourth and fifth, two sections of Richmond Hill to CD 29 – a 9-block area north of Atlantic Avenue with a total population of 3,250 and a 9 block area south of the Long Island Railroad with a total population of 1,075. This would result in CD 28 having a total of 171,119 residents, or 2,560 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall subtraction of 11,388, or a decrease of .062, will have a minor effect on the demographic profile of CD 28, as the demographic mix closely tracks with the existing demographic profile of CD 28.

Council District 29 – Currently, CD 29 is 4,311 below the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 28 transfer two sections of Richmond Hill to CD 29 – a 9-block area north of Atlantic Avenue with a total population of 3,250 and a 9 block area south of the Long Island Railroad with a total population of 1,075 (see CD 28 above). This would result in CD 29 having a total of 168,573 residents, or 14 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall addition of 4,325, or an increase of .026, will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 29.

Council District 30 – Currently, CD 30 is 1,604 below the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 25 transfer a total of 4,521 residents on 16 blocks in the South Elmhurst neighborhood to CD 30 (see CD 25 above). This transfer will bring a mostly one and two-family neighborhood with corresponding R4B zoning into the adjacent more compatible areas of Maspeth in CD 30. This would result in CD 30 having a total of 171,476 residents, or 2,917 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall addition of 4,521, or an increase of .026, will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 30.

Council District 31 — Currently, CD 31 is 3,428 above the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 31 transfer a total of 2,382 residents on 27 blocks in the Arverne by the Sea neighborhood to CD 32. This would result in CD 31 having a total of 170,626 residents, or 2,067 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall subtraction of 2,382, or a decrease of .013, will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 31.

Council District 32 – Currently, CD 32 is 2,948 below the minimum threshold. In order to create minimum disruption to neighborhoods, demographics and civic/zoning boundaries, we propose that CD 28 transfer a 4-block area of Ozone Park with a total population of 1,386 to CD 32 (see CD 28 above); and that CD 31 transfer a total of 2,382 residents on 27 blocks in the Arverne by the Sea neighborhood to CD 32 (see CD 31 above). This would result in CD 32 having a total of 169,379, or 820 over the minimum threshold. The resulting overall addition of 3,768, or an increase of .022, will have a negligible effect on the demographic profile of CD 32.

Conclusion

Based upon the proposed changes proffered by the Queens Civic Congress, minimal gerrymandering and/or negligible wholesale population movements between districts will be achieved with relative ease. If adopted, most neighborhoods throughout Queens will continue to remain intact within existing Council Districts based upon long-established boundaries. In addition, the changes proposed will, in most cases, consolidate existing neighborhoods or communities of interest, whether based upon civic, land use or demographic patterns.

We urge the New York City Redistricting Commission to adopt this proposal.

Paul Graziano, Land Use Chair

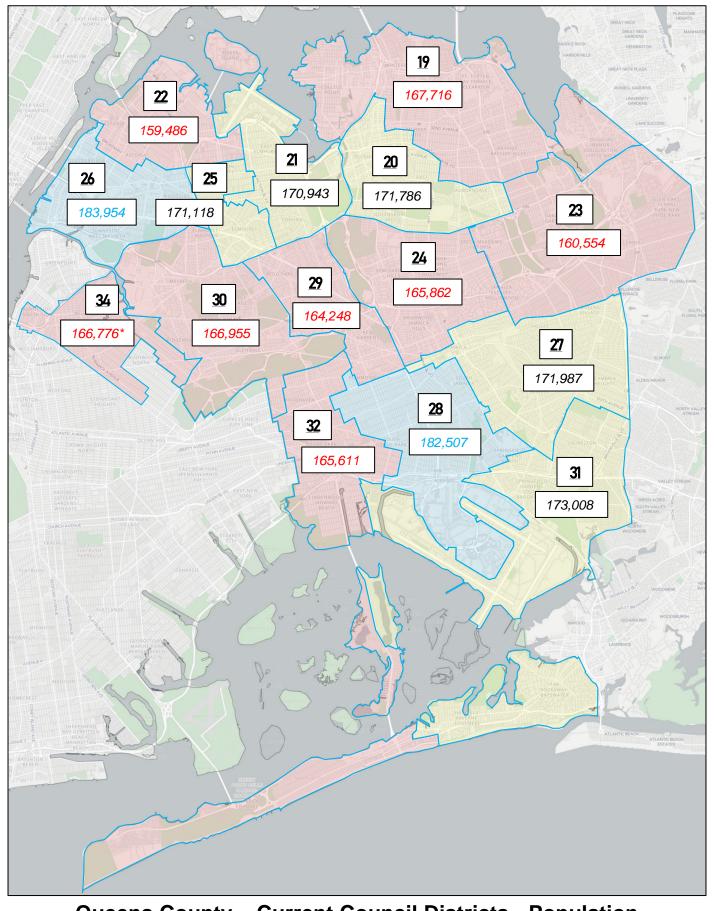
Queens Civic Congress



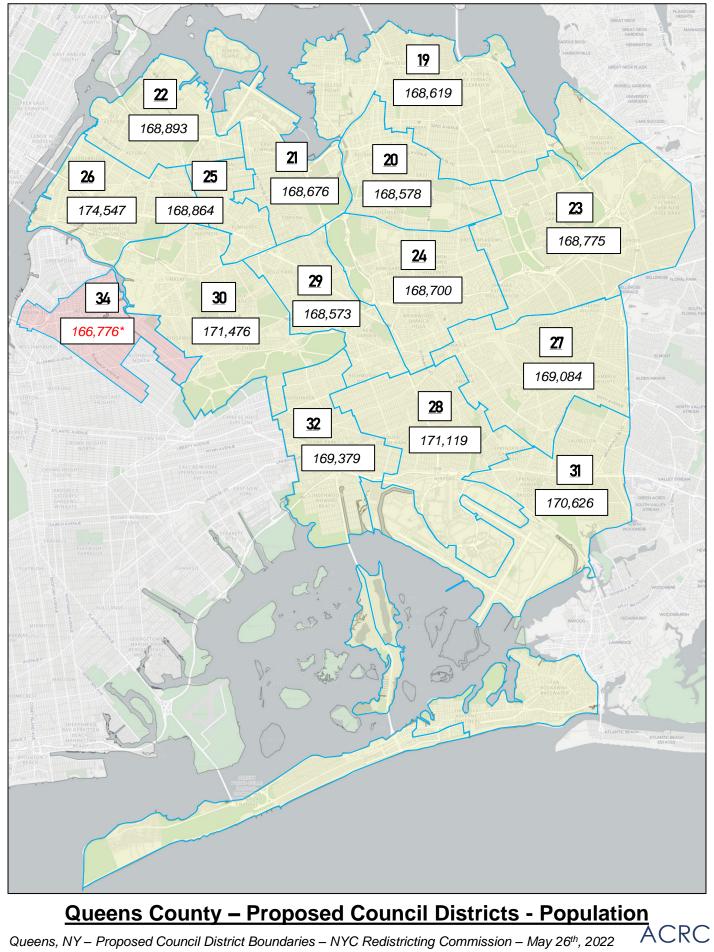
Queens County - Current Council Districts - Population

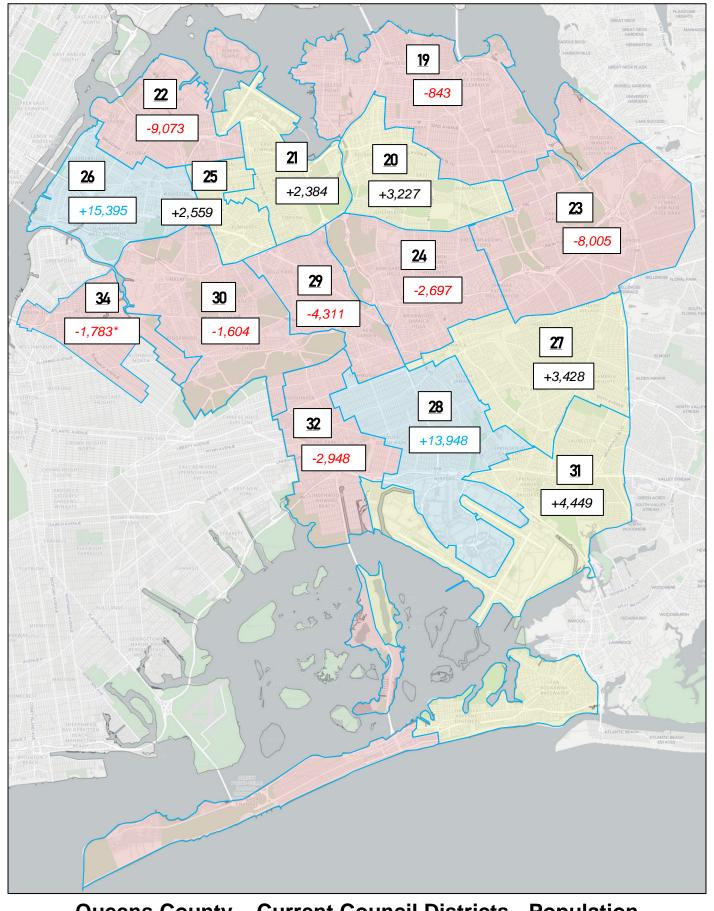






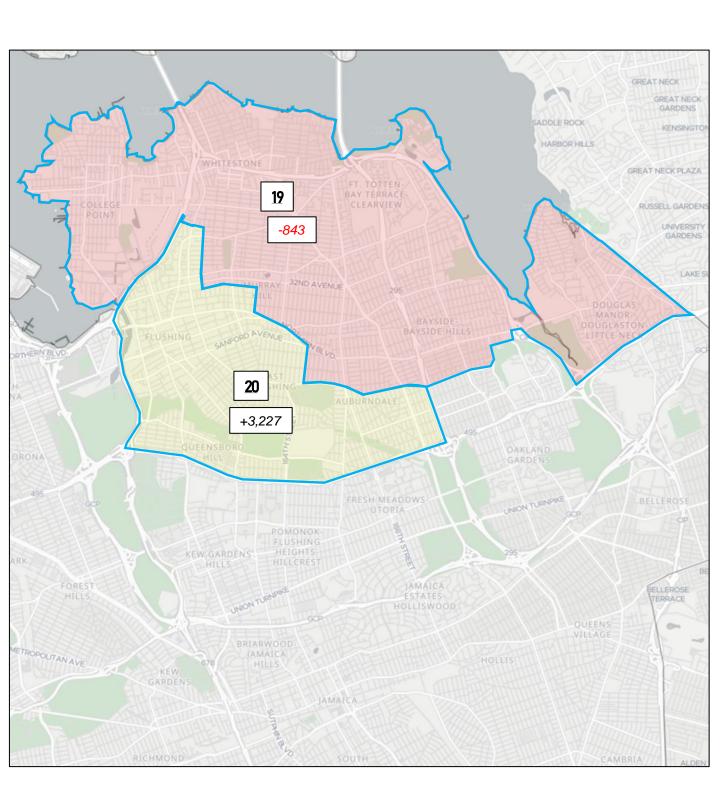
Queens County - Current Council Districts - Population





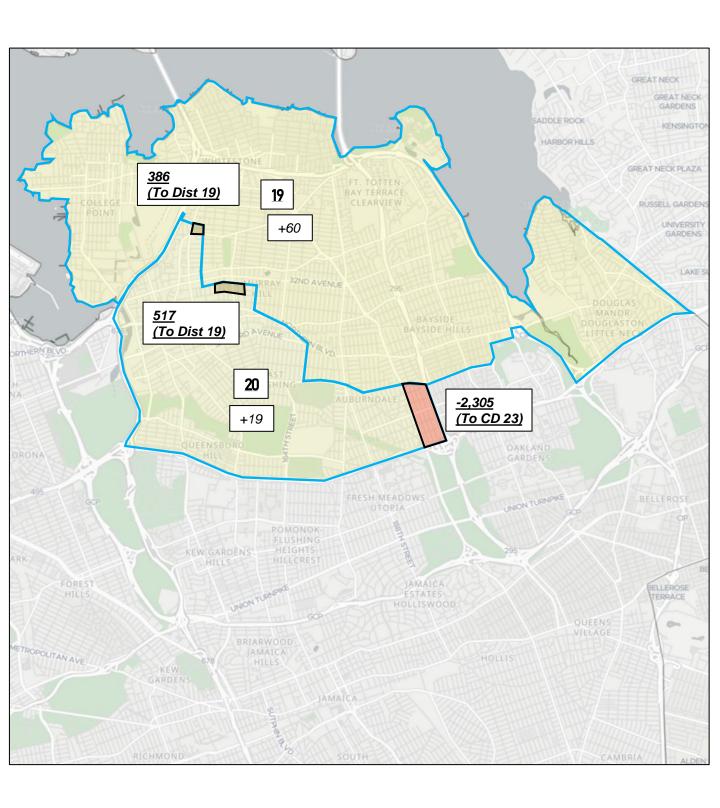
Queens County – Current Council Districts - Population





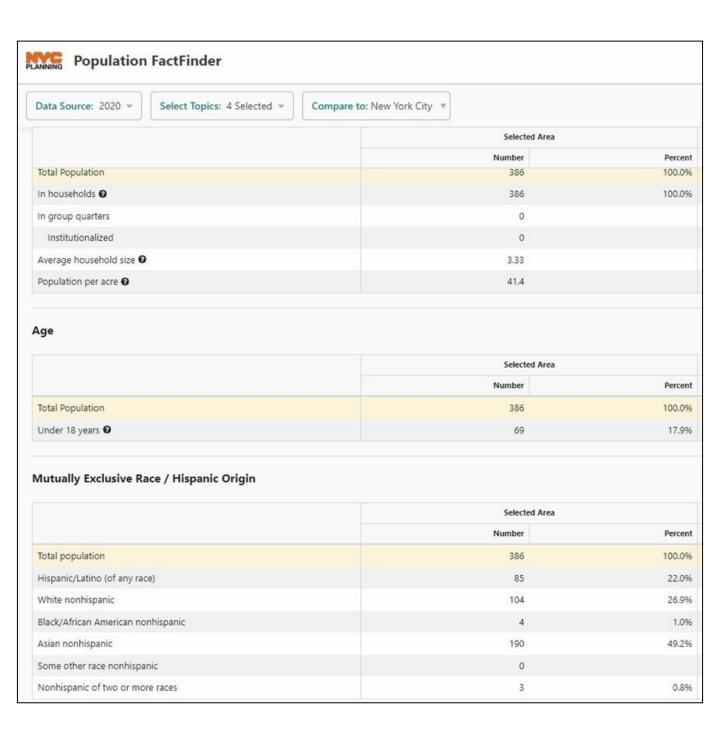
Queens County – Council Districts 19 & 20 – Existing Districts





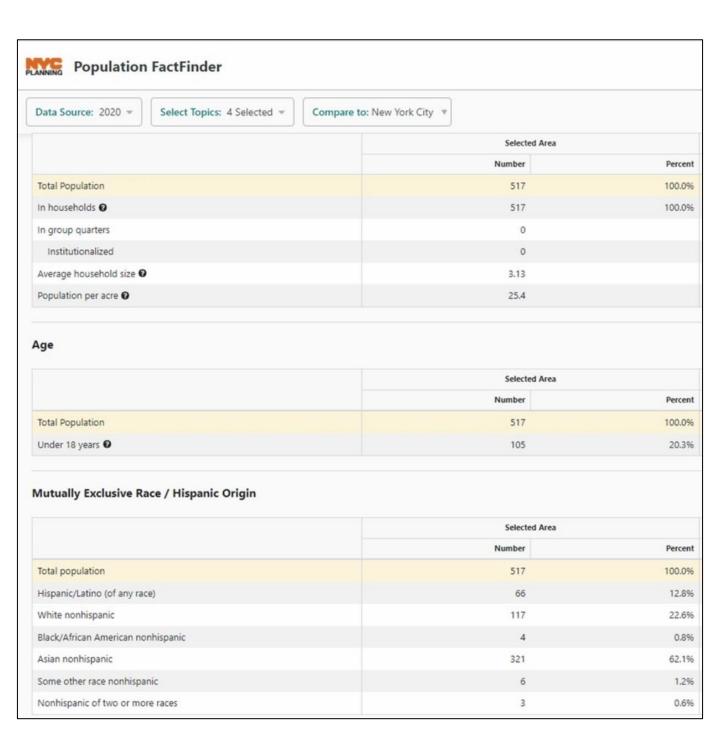


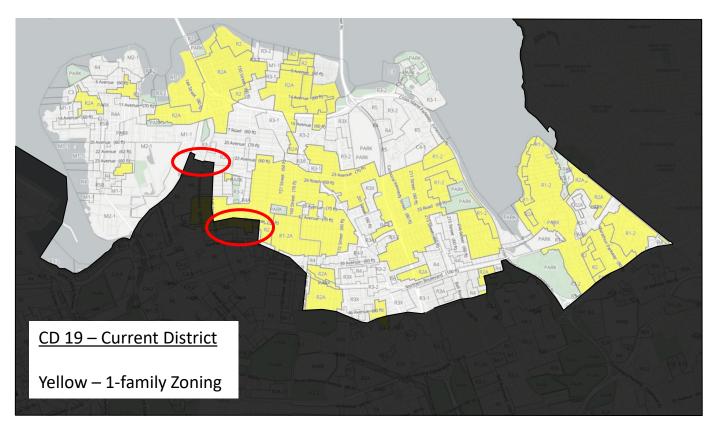


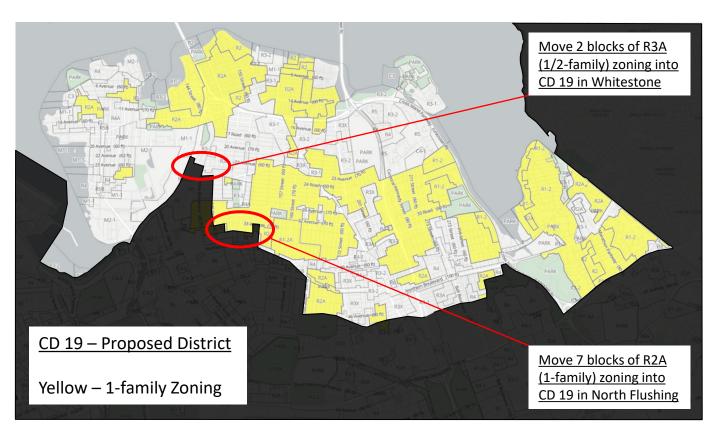


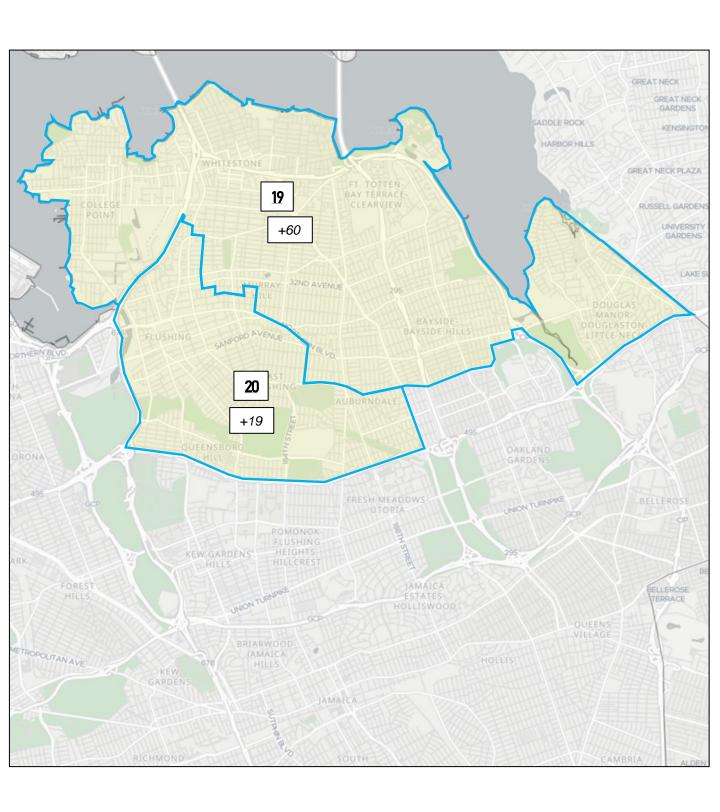


Queens County – Council Districts 19 & 20 – Proposed Changes



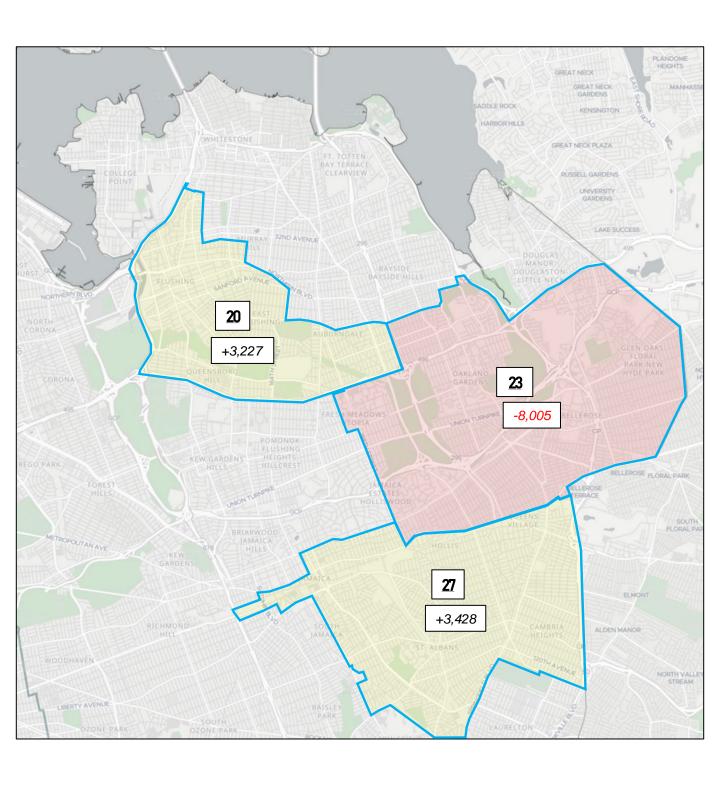






Queens County - Council Districts 19 & 20 - Proposed Districts

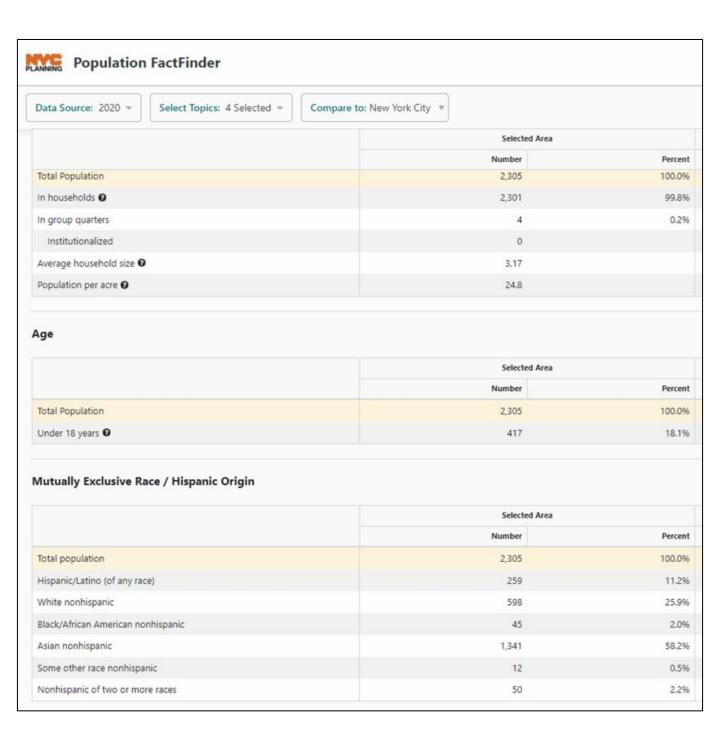


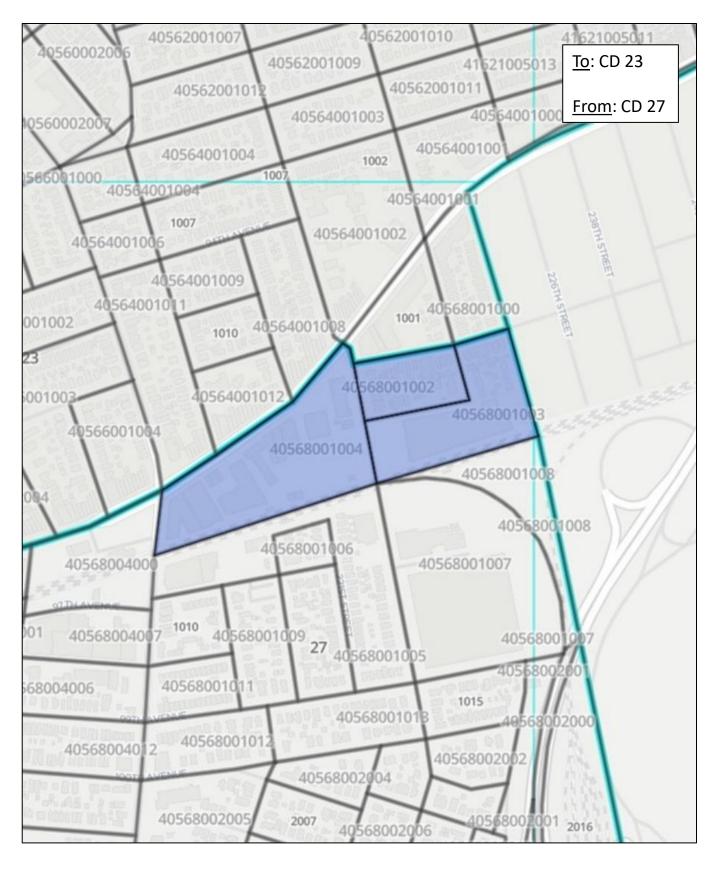


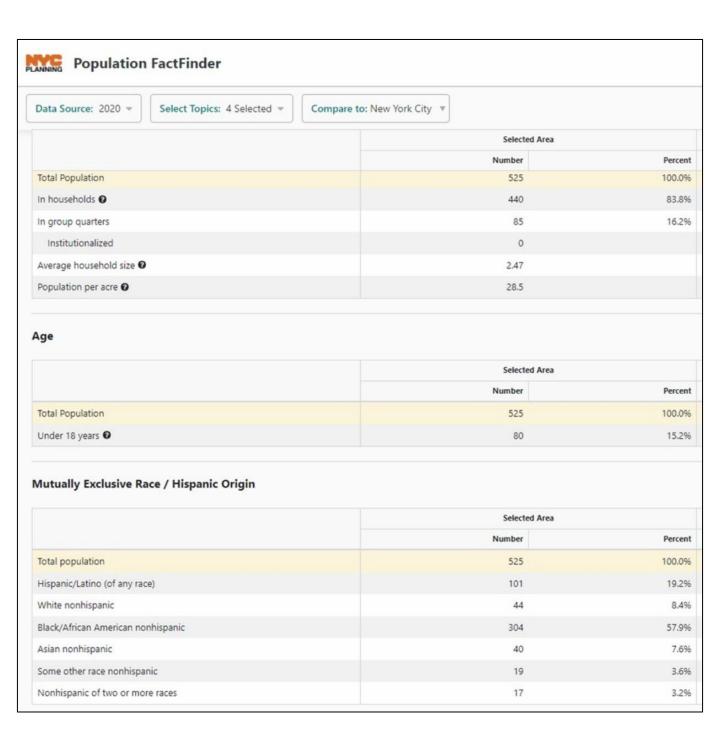
Queens County – Council Districts 20, 23 & 27 – Existing Districts





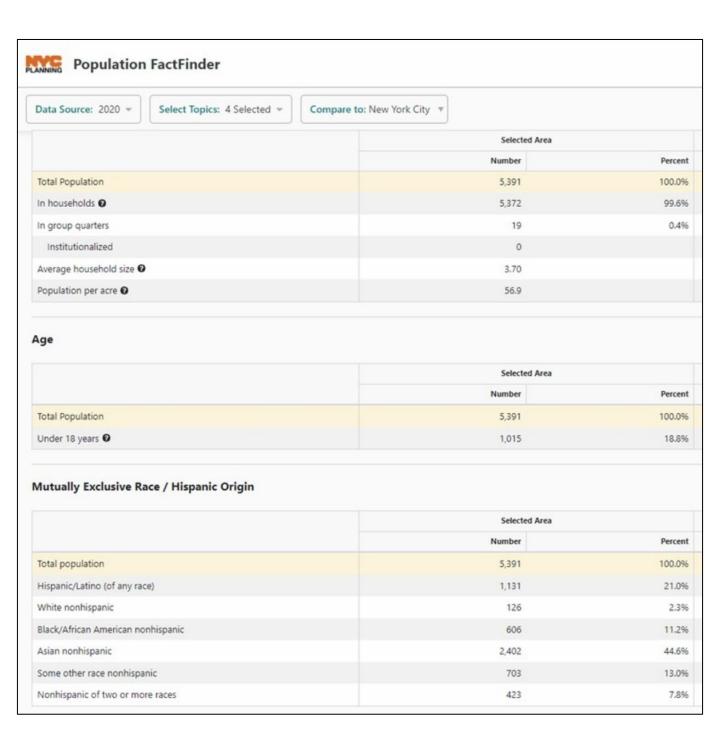


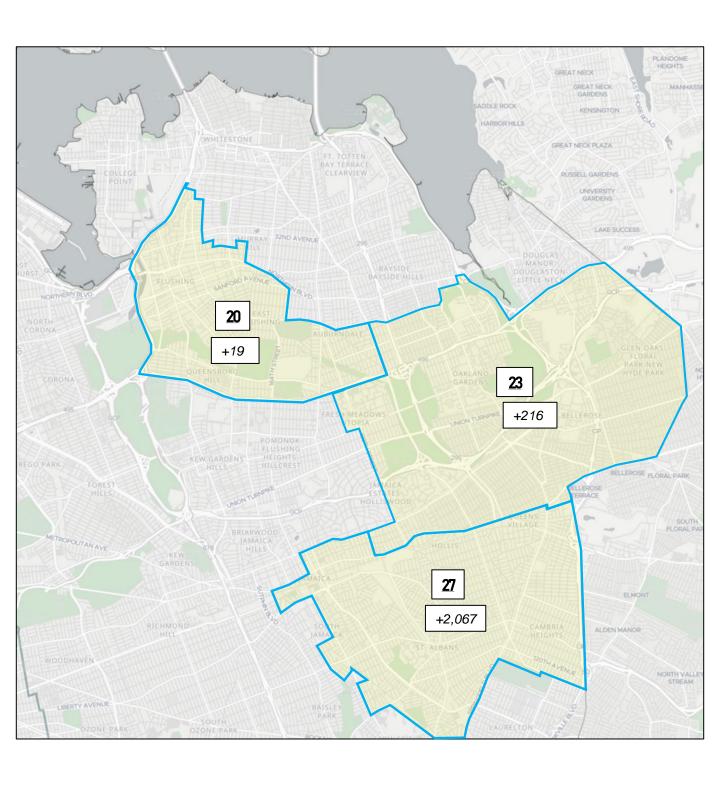




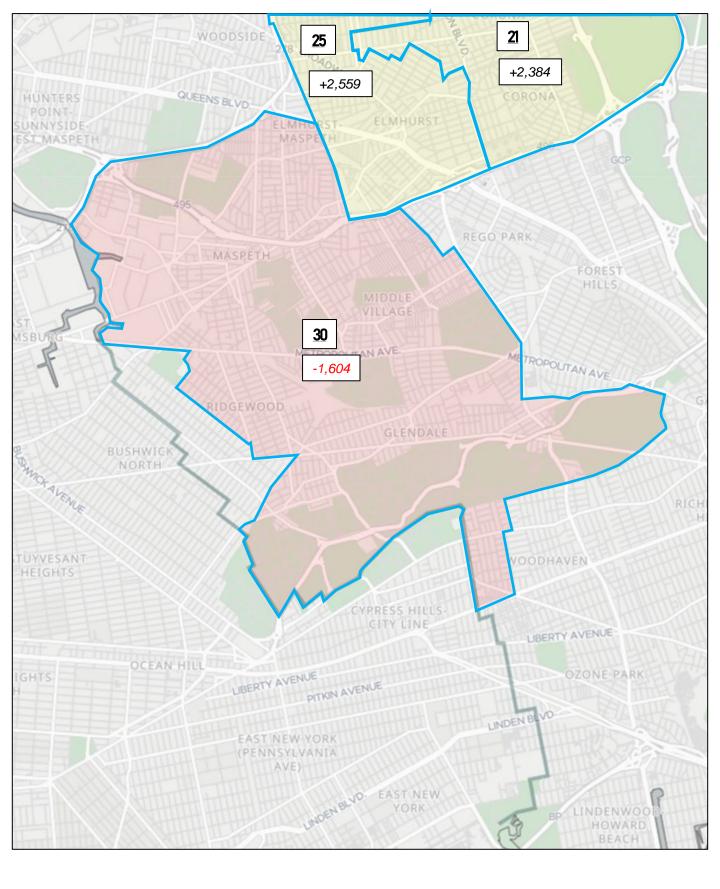


Queens County - Council Districts 20, 23 & 27 - Proposed Changes

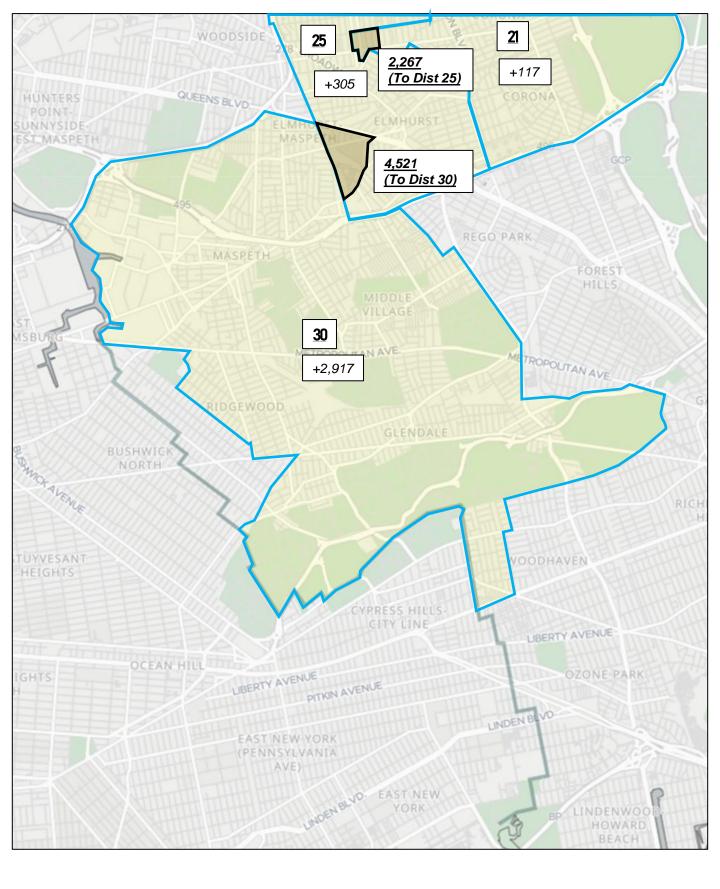


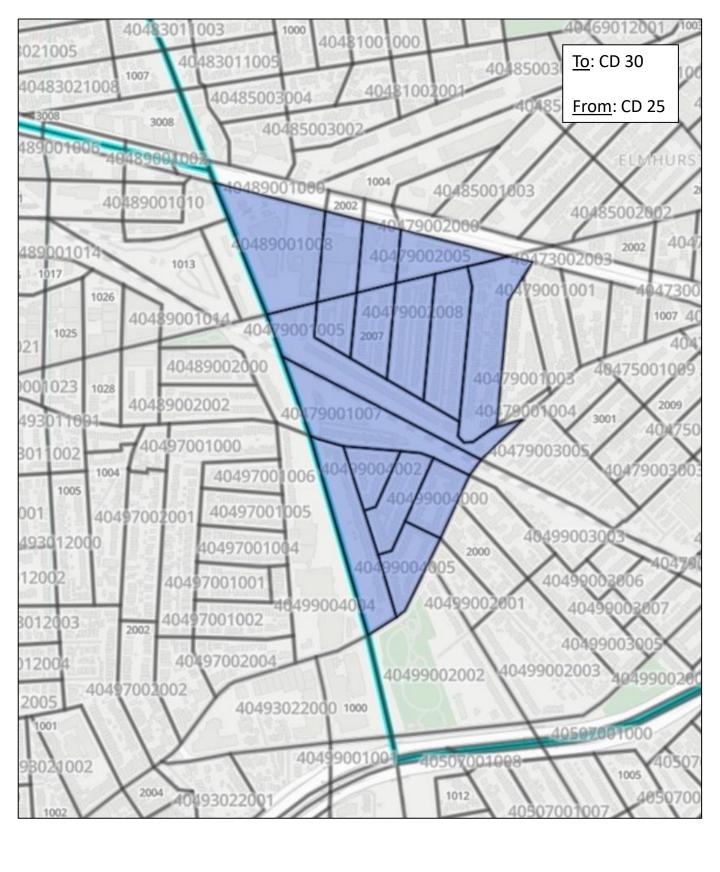


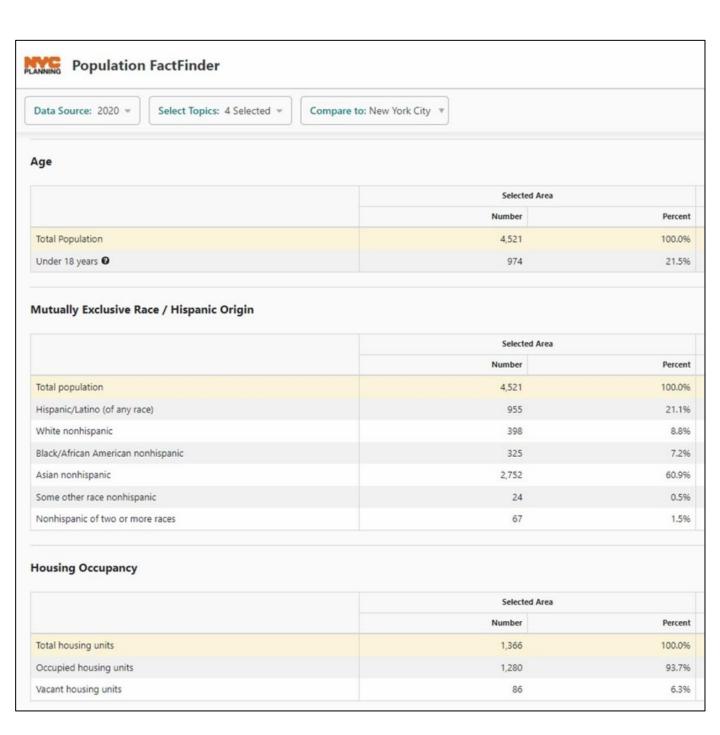
Queens County - Council Districts 20, 23 & 27 - Proposed Districts

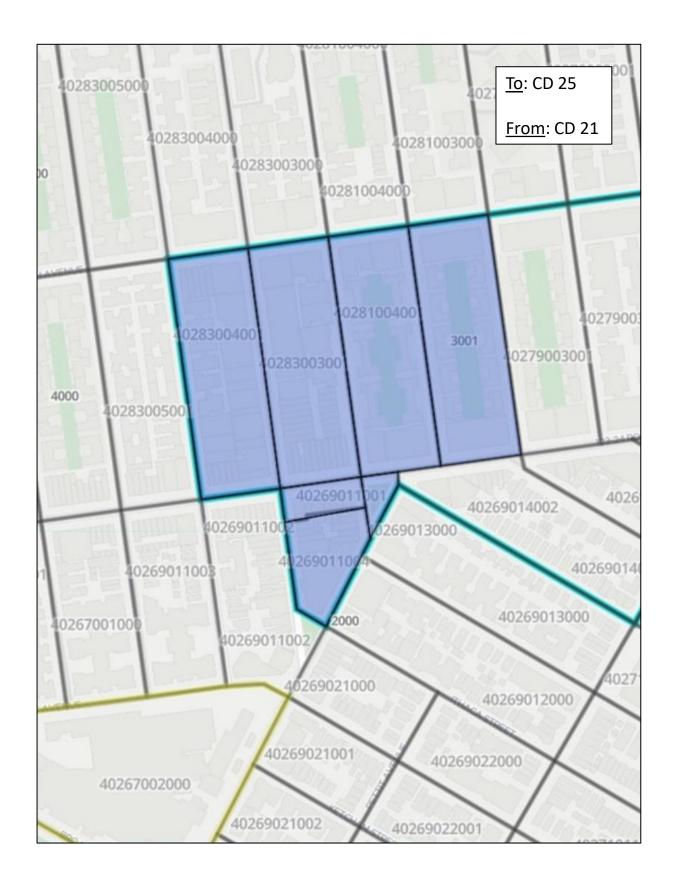


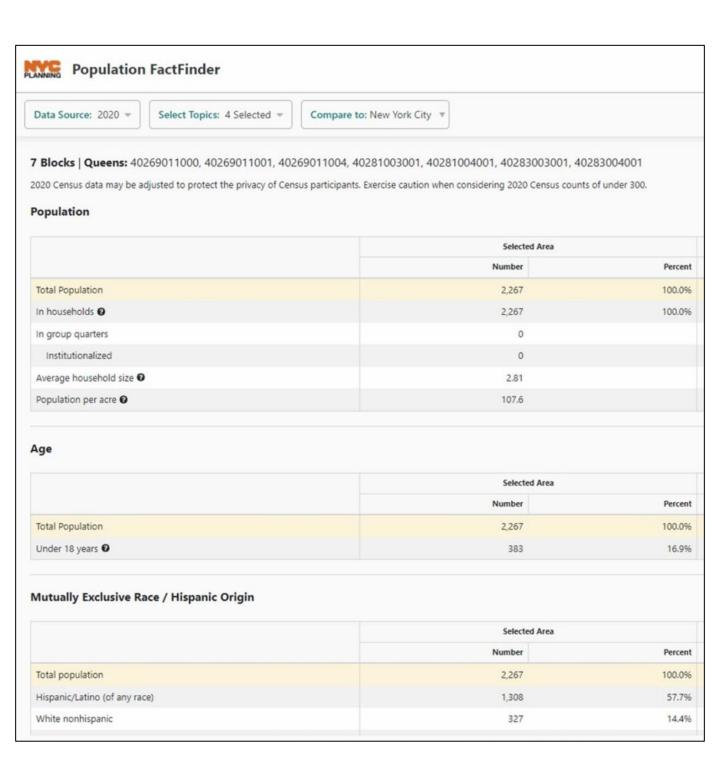
Queens County – Council Districts 21, 25 & 30 – Existing Districts

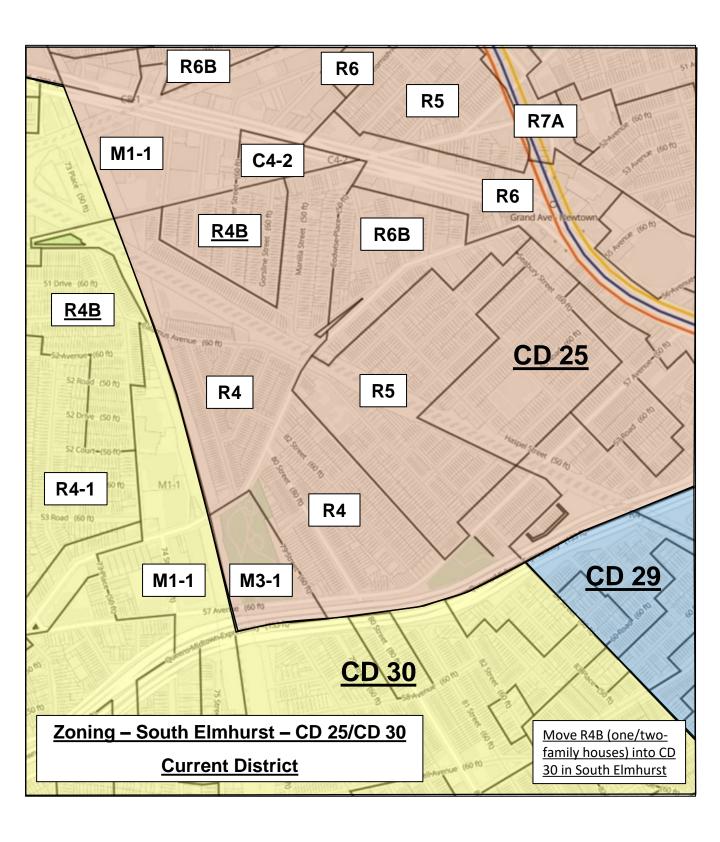




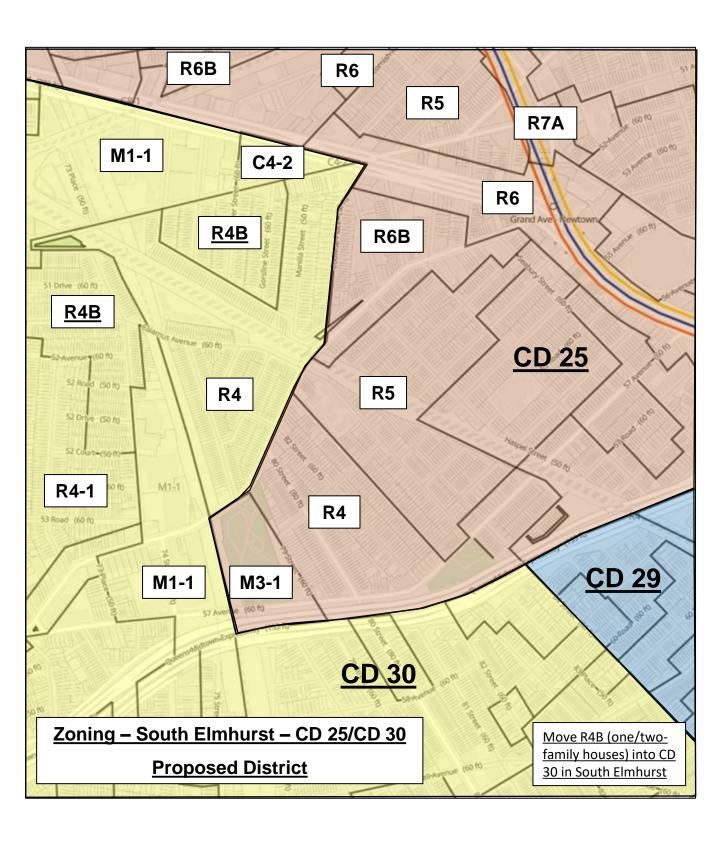




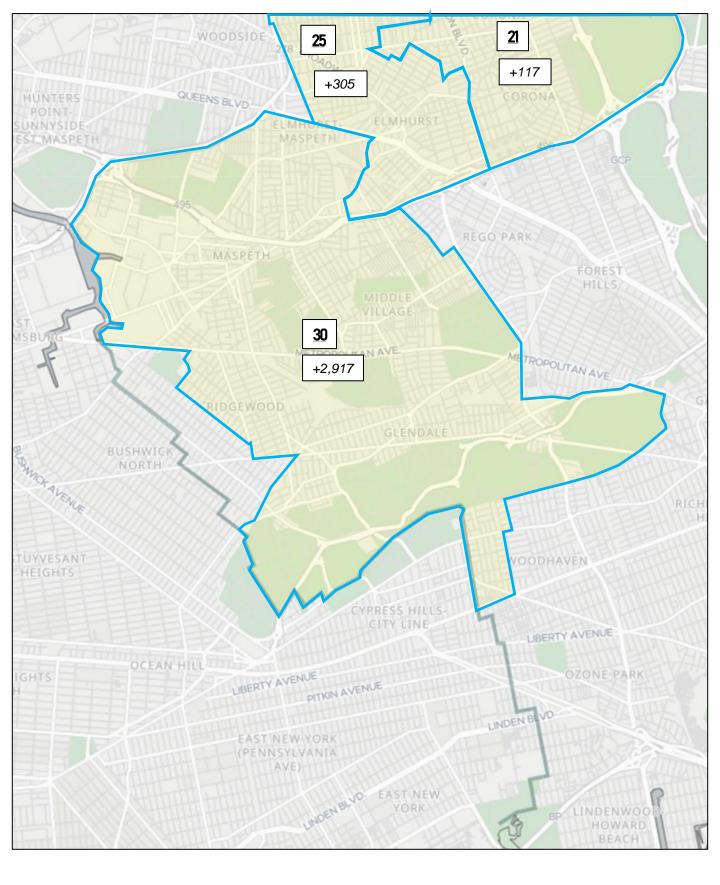




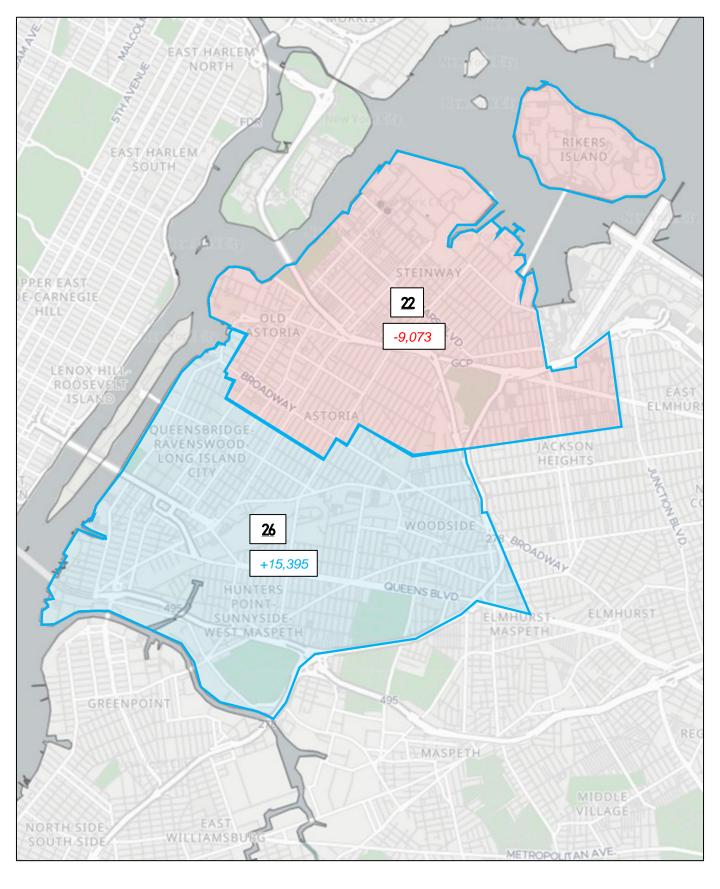
Queens County – Council Districts 21, 25 & 30 – Proposed Changes



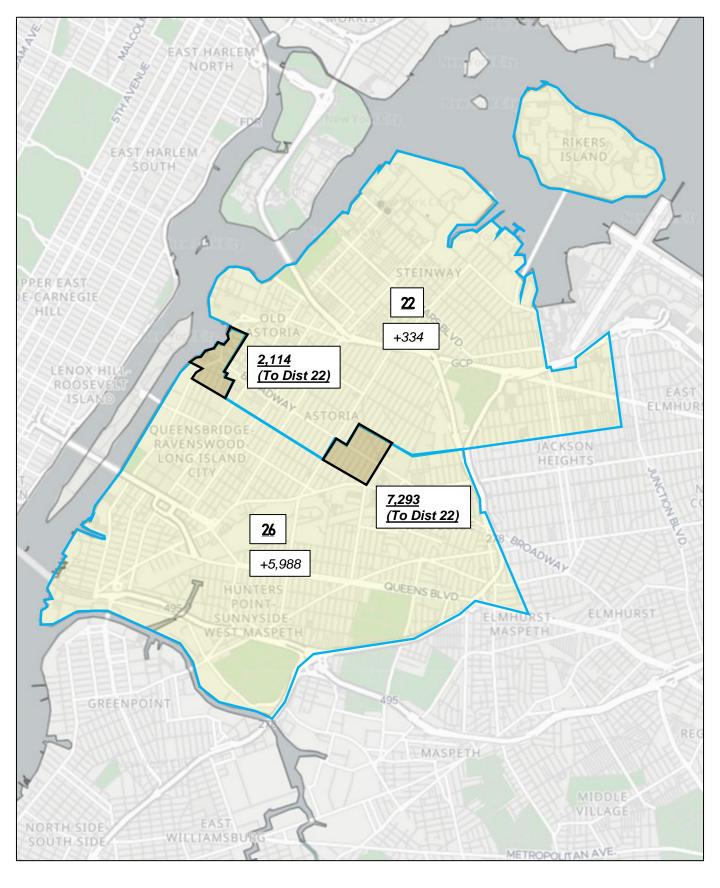
Queens County – Council Districts 21, 25 & 30 – Proposed Changes



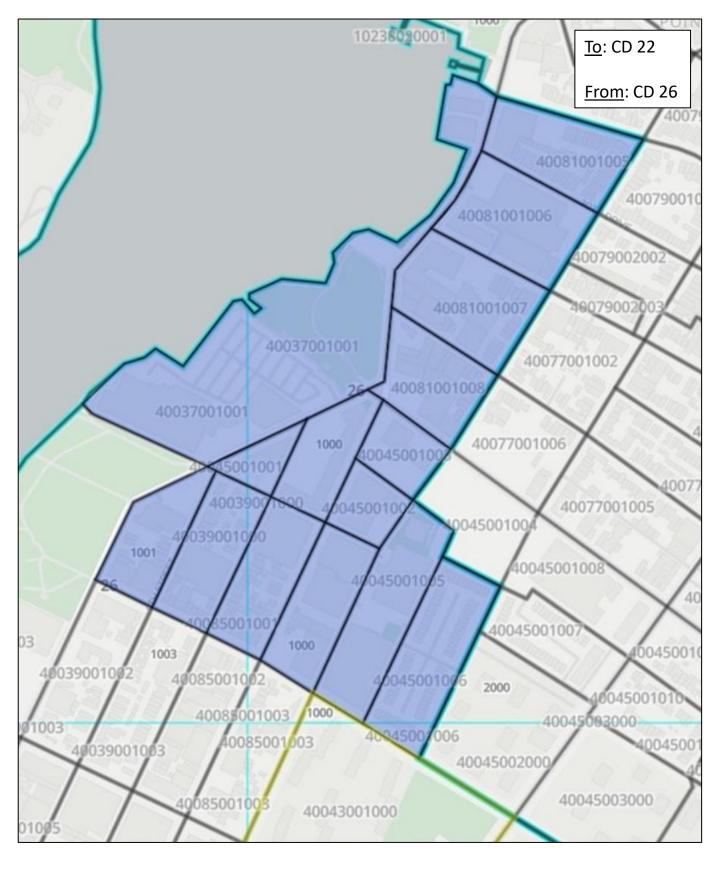
Queens County - Council Districts 21, 25 & 30 - Proposed Districts



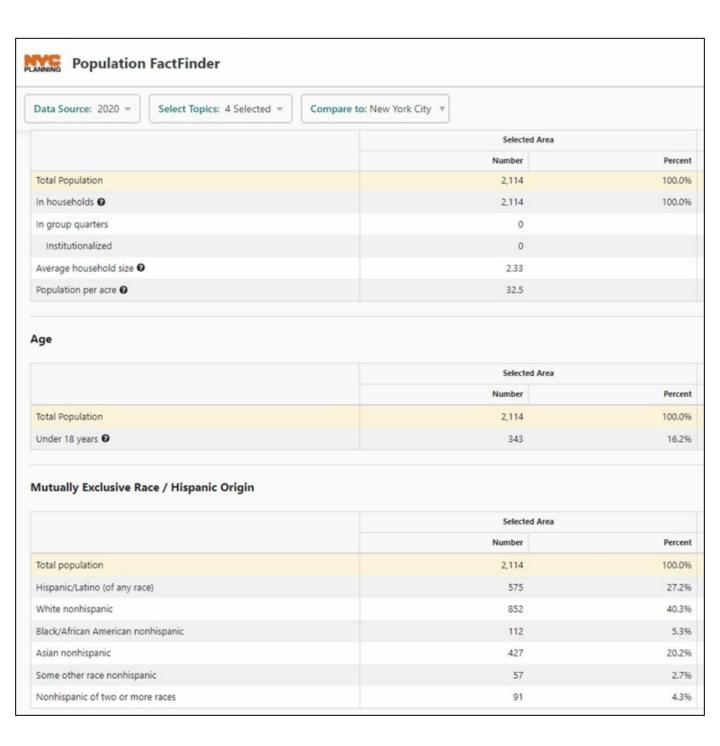
Queens County - Council Districts 22 & 26 - Existing Districts



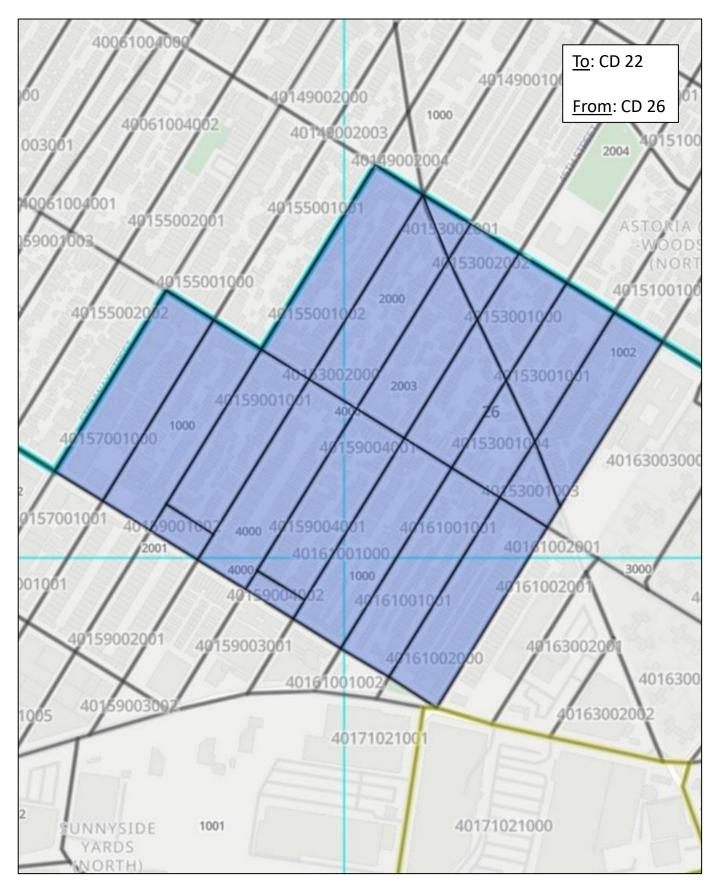
Queens County - Council Districts 22 & 26 - Proposed Changes



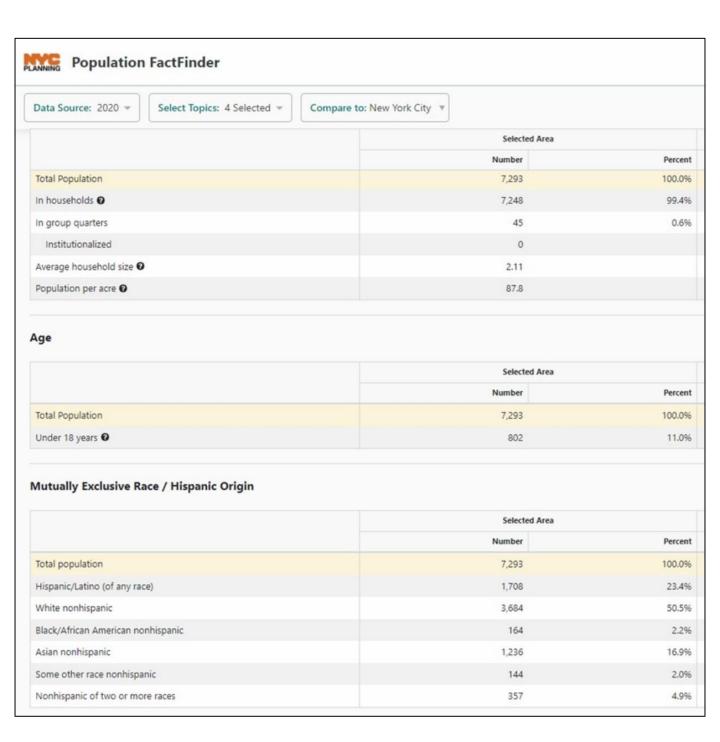
Queens County – Council Districts 22 & 26 – Proposed Changes



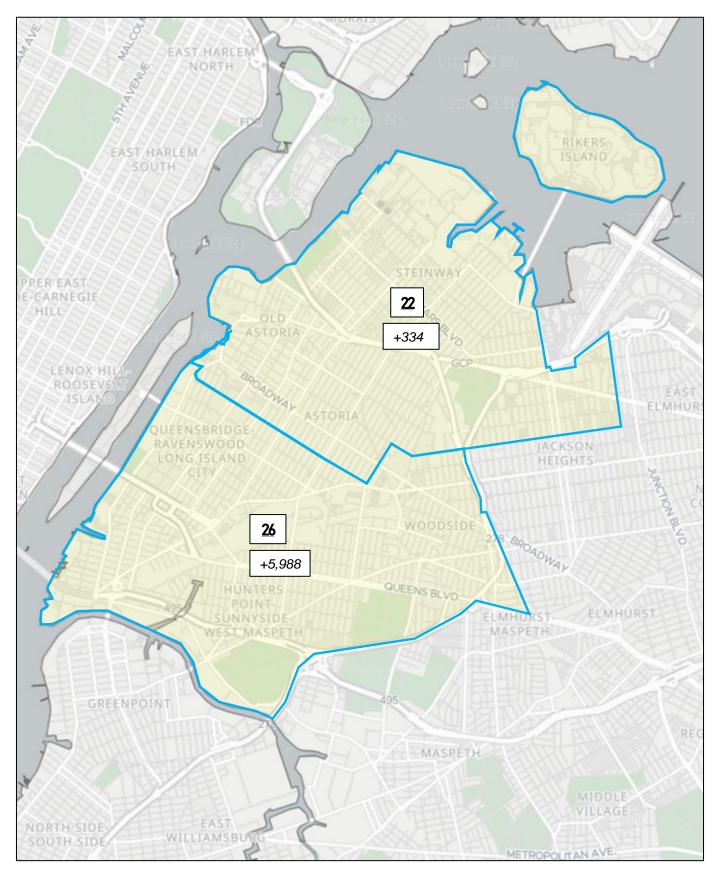
Queens County – Council Districts 22 & 26 – Proposed Changes



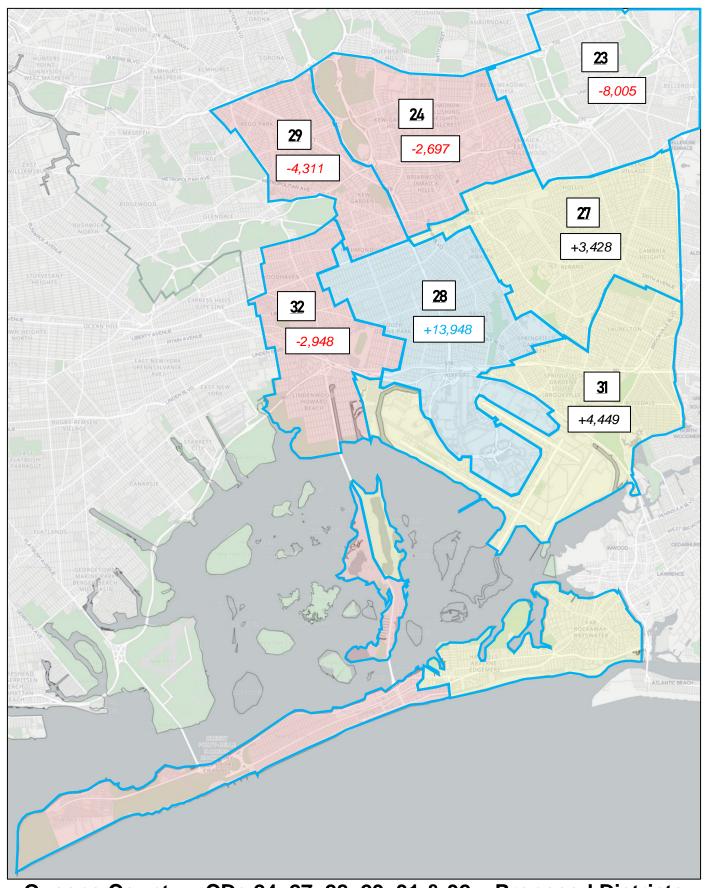
Queens County – Council Districts 22 & 26 – Proposed Changes



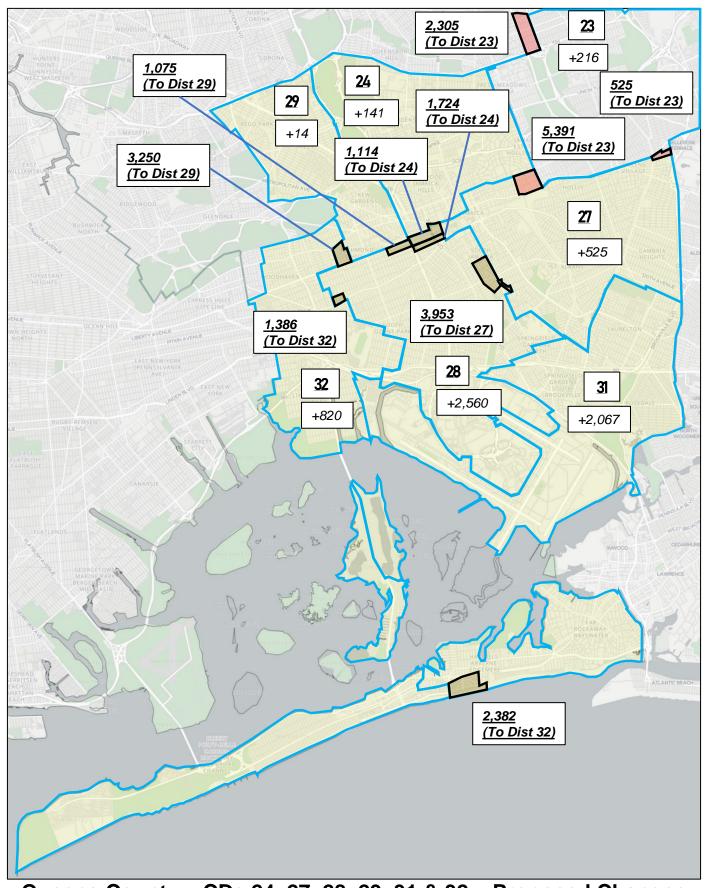
Queens County – Council Districts 22 & 26 – Proposed Changes



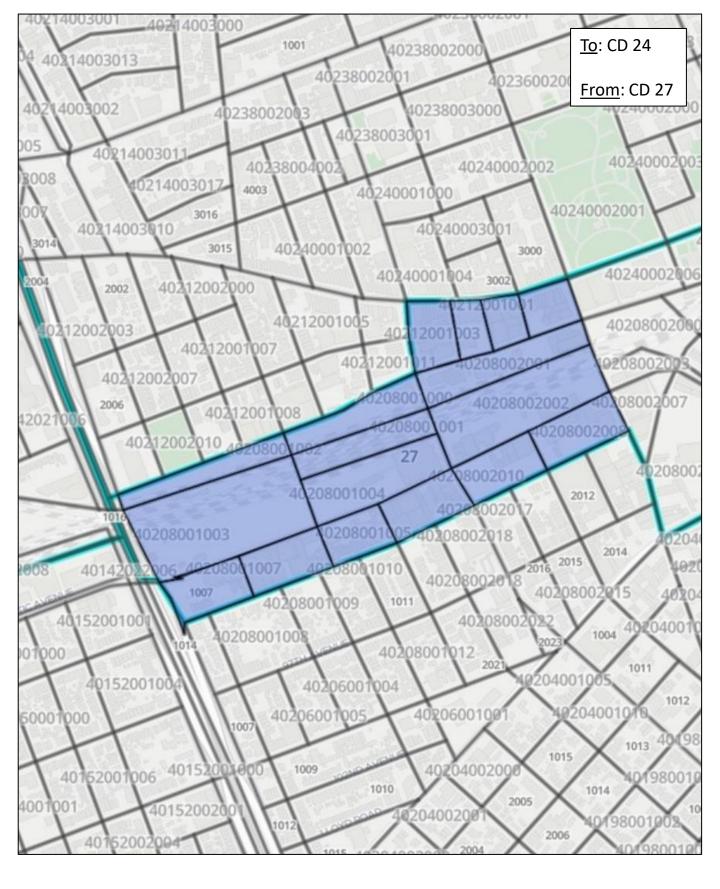
Queens County - Council Districts 22 & 26 - Proposed Districts



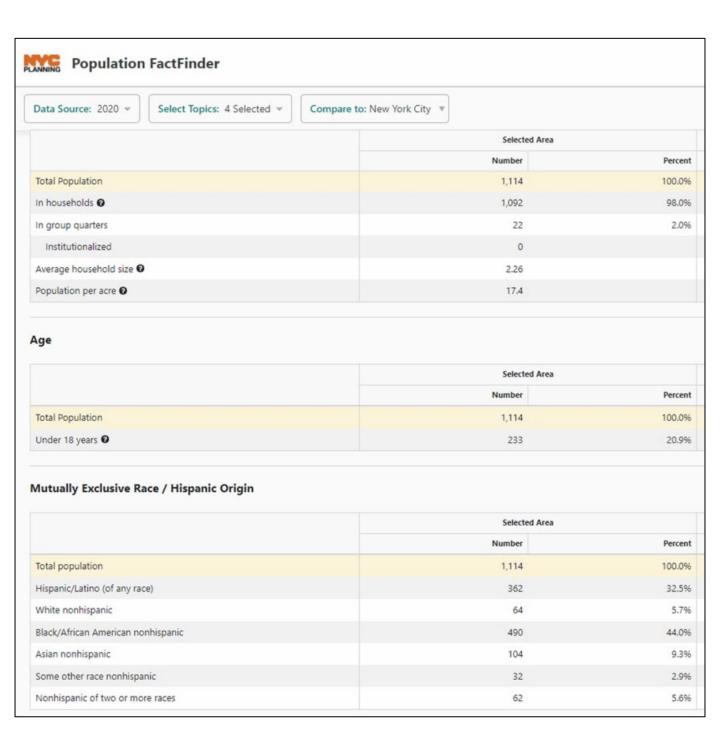
Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Districts

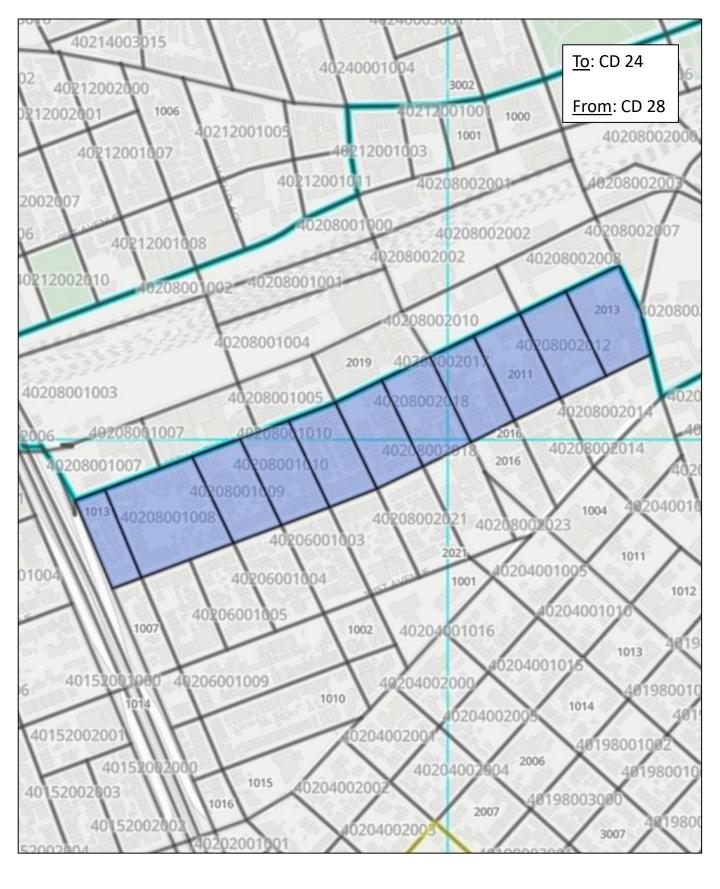


Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Changes

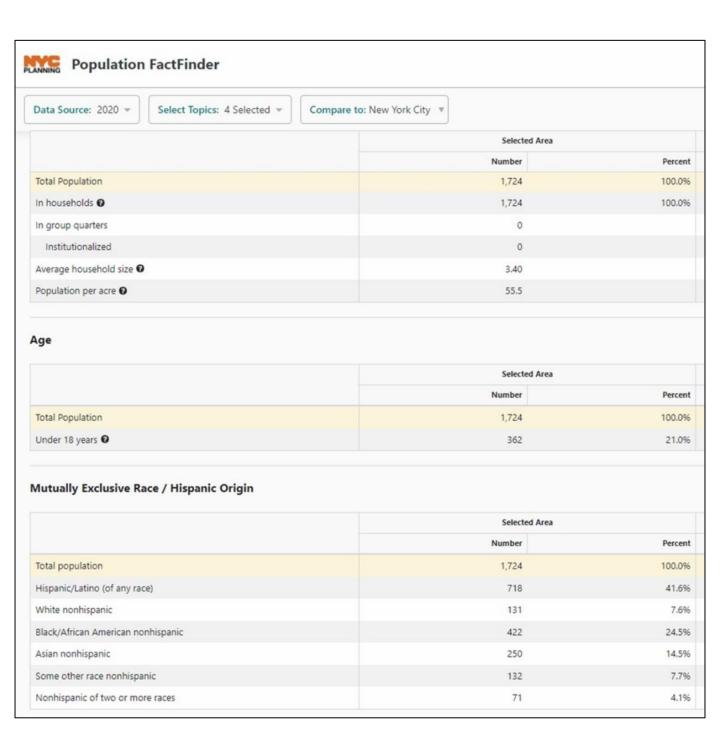


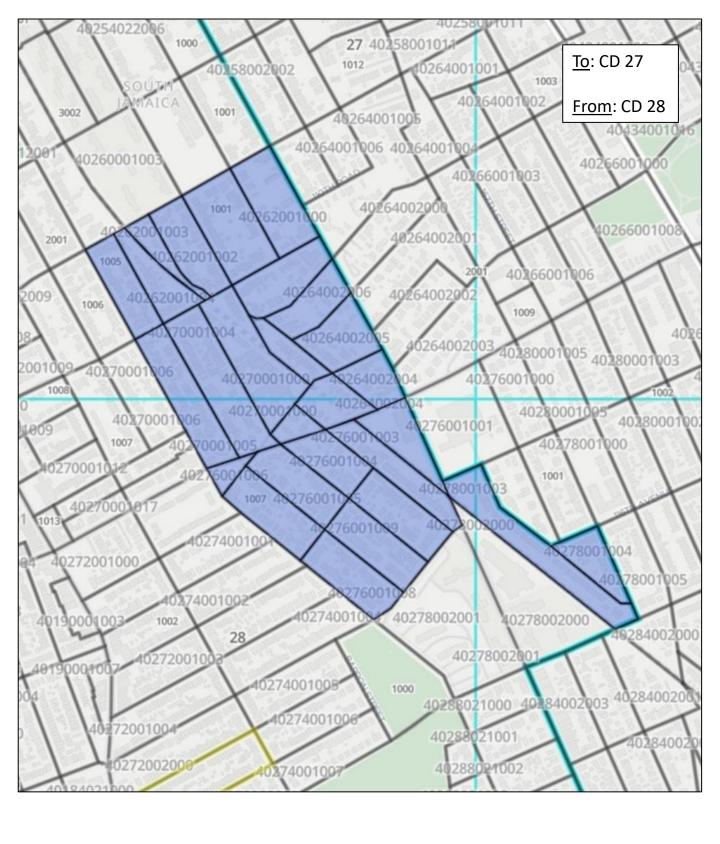
Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Changes

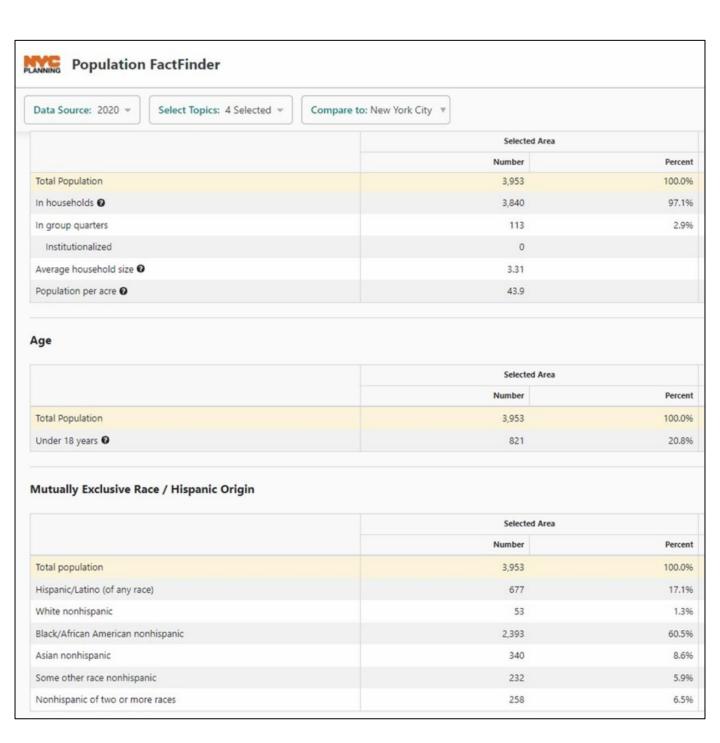




Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Changes

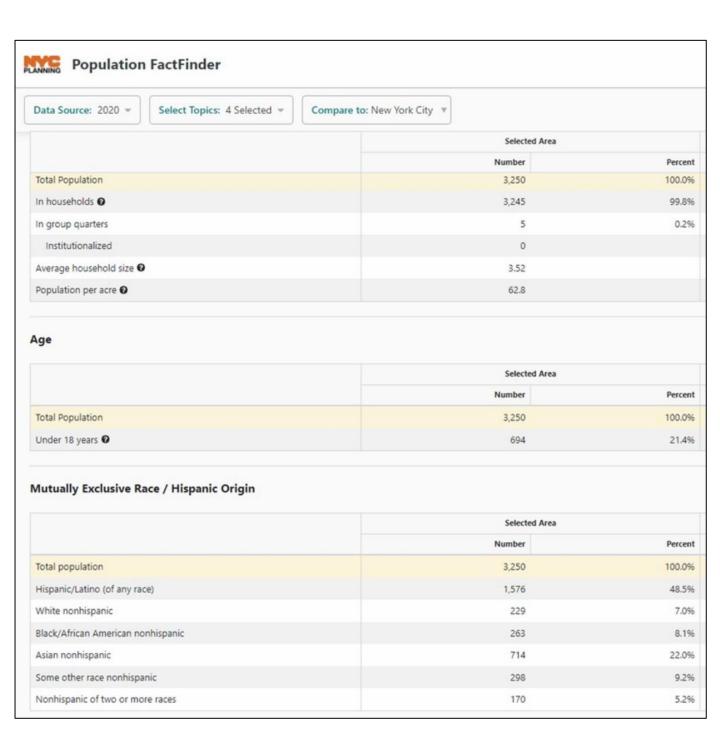






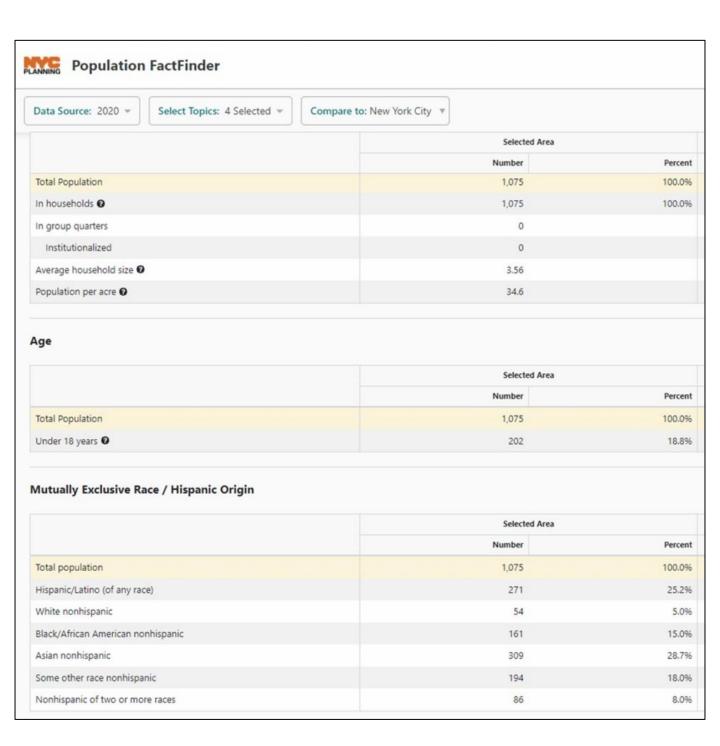


Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Changes

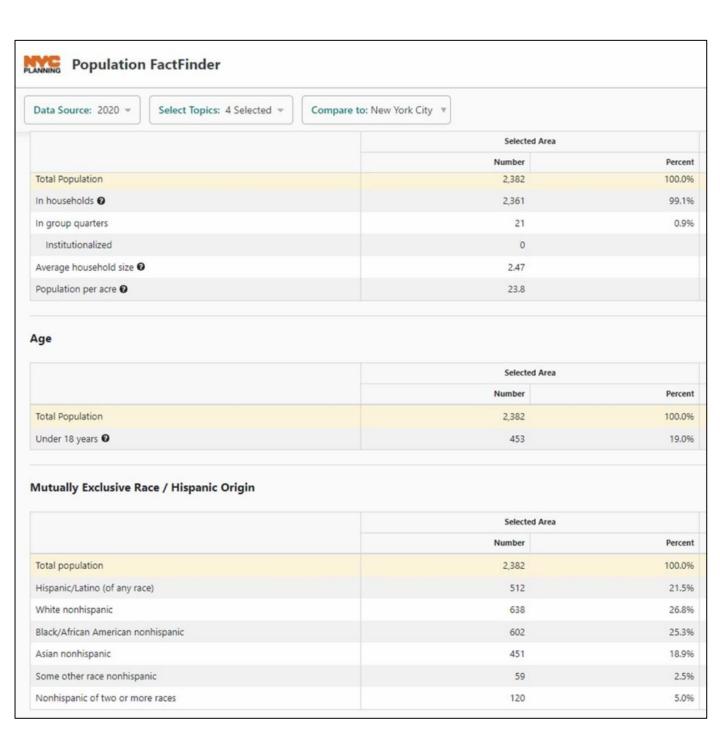




Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Changes

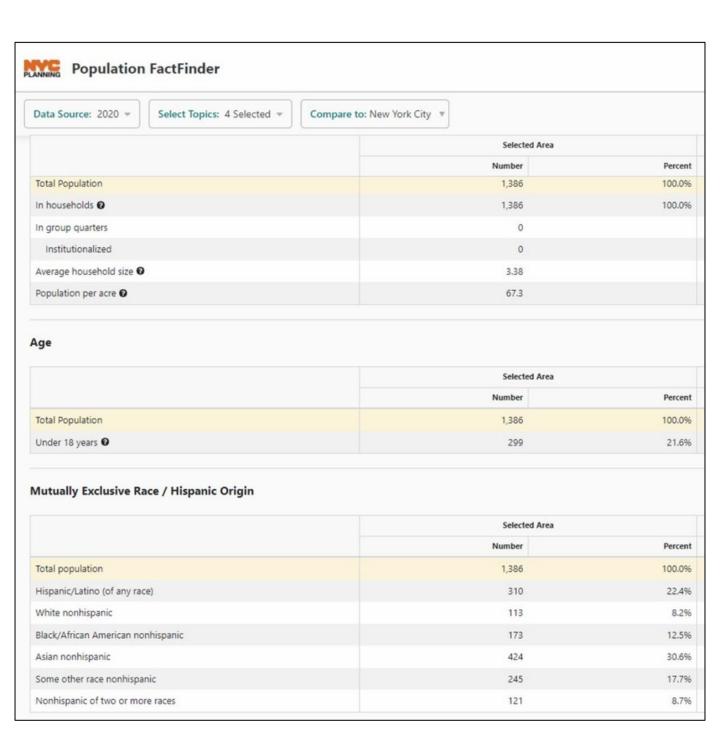


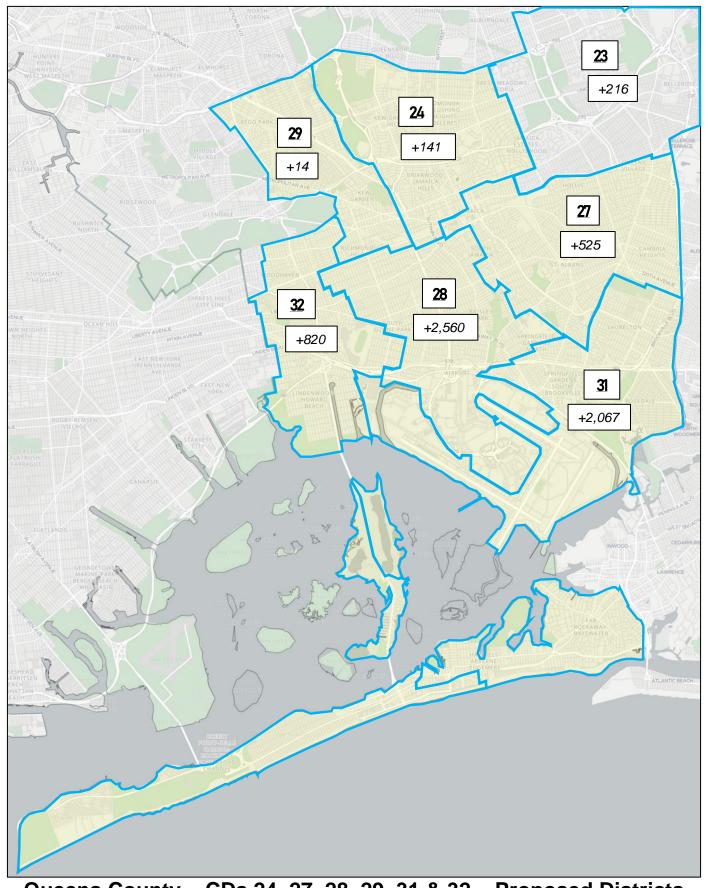






Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Changes





Queens County - CDs 24, 27, 28, 29, 31 & 32 - Proposed Districts

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