

City Council races shaping up

Contenders in 6 of 7 districts

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The filing period hasn't opened yet, but already some interesting races are shaping up for November's Watsonville City Council elections, the first under the new district system.

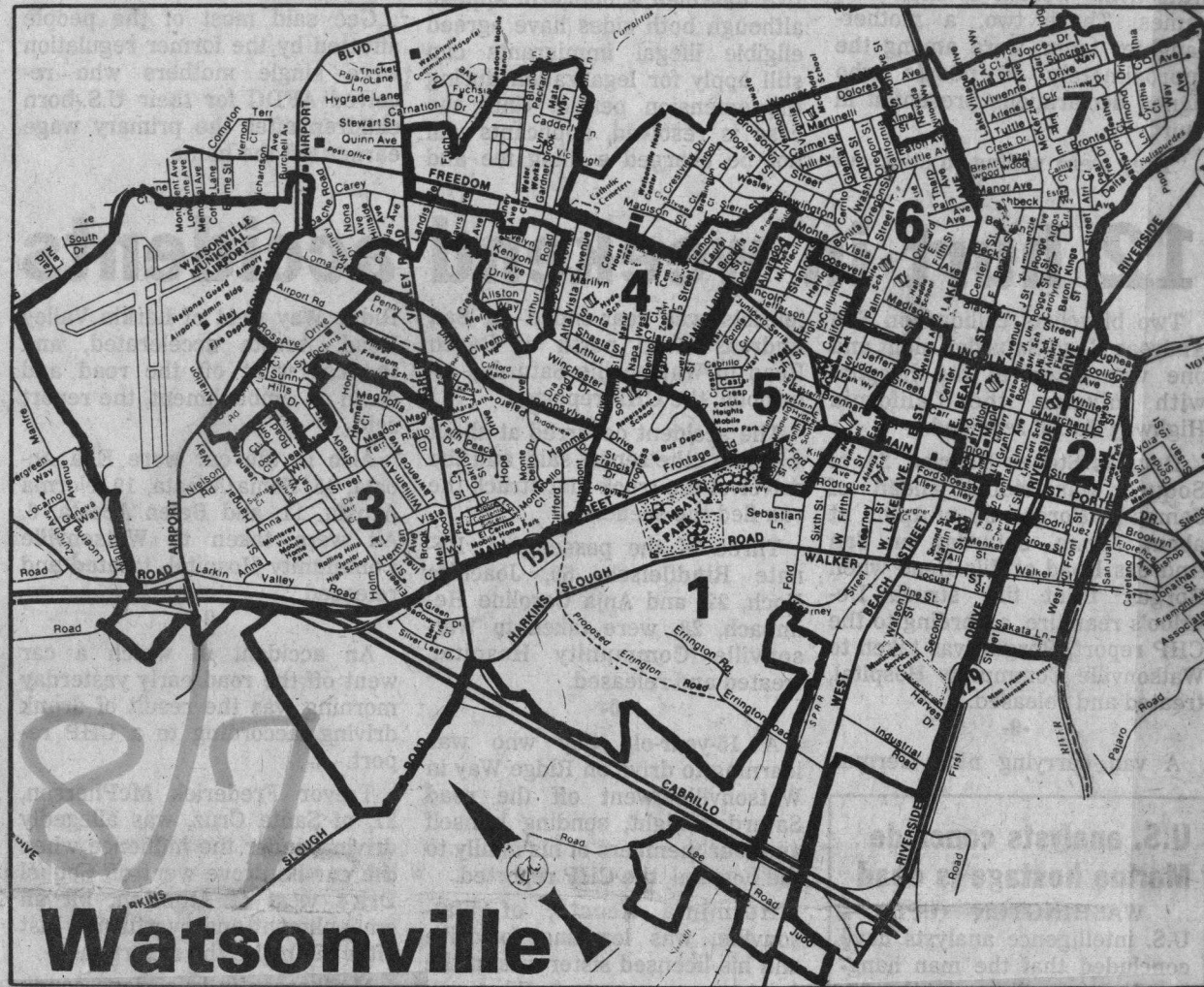
Those listing themselves as definite or probable candidates include two present City Council members in the same district and two city planning commissioners in another district.

The way was cleared for the November 7 election on Friday when federal Judge William Ingram signed the final order in the lawsuit that forced the city to begin the district system.

The order ended a successful four-year legal battle by the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund, which charged the voting power of Latinos was diluted by the Anglo voting bloc under the present at-large system. The City Council is expected to give final approval for the election at its meeting tomorrow.

Filing begins Thursday and ends Aug. 31.

Five people say they will run: Mayor Betty Murphy, present council members Dennis Osmer and Gwen Carroll, Robert Chacanaca, and Todd McFarren. Those who said they will probably run are Cruz Gomez, Oscar Rios, Parr



An approximation of the district map for November's election.

Eves, and planning commissioners Luis De La Cruz and Marie Williams.

Under the plan approved by the court, the city is split into seven districts, with people voting only for a candidate in their own dis-

trict. Instead of the present system of a mayor elected separately by the people, one City Council member will be chosen by the council to serve as mayor.

Of the seven present council members, Rex Clark, Joe Marsano

and Vido Deretich said they won't run again, and Tony Campos said he hasn't decided.

Here's how the races are shaping up:

●District 1 (West Side). Cruz Gomez, a plaintiff in the MALDEF

suit, said she will probably run. Gomez unsuccessfully ran for mayor in 1983 and was a candidate in the May 1989 election that was canceled because of the court ruling on the MALDEF suit.

●District 2 (Downtown). Oscar Rios, who works for the Cannery Workers Organizing Project, a non-profit agency in Watsonville, said he will probably run. Rios is also on the board of directors of the Community Action Board, an agency that oversees a number of programs to aid the poor.

●District 3 (North end). No candidates have emerged from this district yet.

●District 4 (Alta Vista-Arthur Road). Present council member Gwen Carroll and Todd McFarren, a local attorney, said they are running.

Carroll was first elected to the council in 1985, and was a candidate in the canceled May election. McFarren is on the Santa Cruz

Metropolitan Transit District board of directors, the county Transportation Commission and is a director of the Community Action Board.

●District 5 (Heights area). Three people say they'll probably run: Parr Eves, owner of a print shop who has been involved in a number of community activities, including president of the YMCA board of directors; Luis De La Cruz, a former school principal who now owns a trophy shop; and Marie Williams, a retired schoolteacher who serves on the city Planning Commission, as does De La Cruz.

Roy Ingersoll, who served on the council from 1983-87 after a career as a Watsonville policeman, said he is considering running.

●District 6 (Martinelli-Brewington). Present council member Dennis Osmer and Mayor Betty Murphy said they are running, and Councilman Tony Campos is undecided. Murphy has been on the council since 1979; Osmer and Campos since 1987.

●District 7 (East Side). Robert Chacanaca, who unsuccessfully ran for mayor in 1987, said he is running. Chacanaca said his politics are combination of left-of-center and traditional values.