

## Founder's District Split Proposal FAQ

### **Q: Why should we split Founder's District?**

**A:** The proposal to split the district came from recent top district officers. They were concerned that the district was getting too big to manage. In comparison to the other districts within Toastmasters International, Founder's District is one of the largest with 229 clubs.

The workload in managing such a large district for the top District officers is significant. Think about the business world - how many direct reports can you properly manage? We are up to 8 Divisions - and now looking at 9! That is a lot of people for the District Director and the rest of the District team to work with - especially for volunteers. Being a District Director is not supposed to be a full time job! Yet the workload *is* significant due to the number of people that have to be coordinated. This workload has also deterred good candidates from running for higher office.

Splitting the District would reduce the workload of top District officers and provide additional leadership opportunities. (Two sets of District-wide leaders like District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, etc.) Because the scope will be reduced, more members should be willing to step up into the leadership roles. It would also provide an additional International Speech Contest contestant to go the International Convention. There could also be more candidates for International Director and Regional Advisor. (Typically a District that has more than one candidate will select which candidate will go forward from the District.)

### **Q: Why can't we just leave the District intact?**

**A:** Doing nothing is an option. We don't have to split the district. But doing nothing will not solve the current issues. We can ignore the size issues, but that will not make them go away. There is only one district with 300+ clubs right now worldwide. We are having difficulty finding venues large enough to accommodate all those who want to attend LACE. Splitting districts is a natural outcome of growth. Think of cell mitosis. Founder's is ripe for an additional Division next year (making it *even more of a burden* on the District leaders).

### **Q If we don't vote to split Founder's District, could the Board of Directors do it for us?**

**A:** Yes. Article XII: Districts, Section 1: How Established – states:

*“For the purpose of efficient administration, the Board of Directors of Toastmasters International is authorized to divide the territory covered by member clubs into districts, or form new districts and establish the boundaries thereof. Each district shall be designated by a number. Each district shall be divided into areas, each under the direction of an area governor. The district may organize areas together into divisions, each under the direction of a division governor. Each district shall abide by the District Administrative Bylaws issued, and modified from time to time, by the Board of Directors.”*

Additionally, on page 168, Policy 7.0, District Structure, Section 2 - District Formation, B IV states:

*“The Board may form, consolidate, or reform districts on its own initiative for the best interests of Toastmasters International and the clubs.”*

At the Fall 2014 Conference, when Past International President Alfred Herzing, DTM presented on the split proposal, he indicated that he could not see the TI Board of Directors taking action on its own and it would be Founder's decision to split or not. However, he has since learned of a situation where a district failed to complete a split and the Board DID take action. The current feeling from the Board is that they are not inclined to take action. However, the progress of our split is being monitored by the Board, as referenced in the Board minutes, and the precedent has been set.

### **Q: What is the benefit to the individual member?**

**A:** This is a proposal at the DISTRICT level. Members participate at the club level and are served by their club officers. Club officers are served by their Area Directors. Splitting the district changes nothing for the member. So there is no direct benefit to the individual member. One may then say, well why even do the split then if it doesn't benefit the member? We should do it because there is also no HARM done to the individual member AND it DOES provide benefits to District leaders as mentioned above (lighter work load, additional opportunities, etc.).

**Q: Who can vote on this proposal to split the District?**

A: The voting members of the District Council, which includes: the Club Presidents and VP Educations (or their proxy), the District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, Public Relations Manager, Administration Manager, Finance Manager, the Division Directors and the Area Directors.

**Q: What if I don't want to leave Founder's District, the birthplace of Toastmasters?**

A: There is a natural historic tie to Founder's District and it is understandable that many of us would miss no longer being a part of Founder's. But that shouldn't prevent us from moving forward. Change is a natural part of life. Some members are excited at the prospect of becoming members of the "Century District", as Toastmasters International has reserved District 100 for our new district. If we do not do the split now, we will lose that number. The reality is that the average member in the average club doesn't know, nor care, what District he/she is in. (Even though the discussion of the split in the last year has certainly increased awareness that we are Founder's District.) The split changes nothing at the club level for our members and this is the most important level for the organization. The split also changes nothing at the Area level. Some Divisions may be redrawn along the new border.

**Q: Where is the proposed dividing line between the districts?**

A: Since August, Jeanne Cassidy led a committee of members from all over Founder's District. She solicited input and participation from all of the Divisions. Members of the committee included current officers of Founder's District, as well as past leaders.

There is no perfect answer as to where to split the district. The committee looked at 5 different alternatives. There was even discussion of "giving" some territory to neighboring Districts. This idea was not pursued because not only would the Founder's District Council have to vote at the business meeting to give the territory away, the other District(s) would have to have their District Council to vote to accept the territory. Splitting was complicated enough without including other districts.

Here are the 5 proposals the committee looked at:

Name	# clubs	Avg size	Total members	Charter Strength	Charter %	12 & under	12 & under %
22 North	111	18.95	2104	56	50.45	25	22.52
22 South	118	22.11	2609	79	66.95	13	11.02
Bristol North	133	18.95	2520	67	50.38	29	21.8
Bristol South	96	22.84	2193	68	70.83	9	9.38
McFadden N	133	18.61	2475	64	48.12	31	23.31
McFadden S	96	23.31	2238	71	73.96	7	7.29
91 North	82	19.46	1596	42	51.22	17	20.73
91 South	147	21.20	3117	93	63.27	21	14.29
Ball Rd N	94	19.41	1825	49	52.13	18	19.15
Ball Rd S	135	21.39	2888	86	63.7	20	14.81
<b>Current</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>20.58</b>	<b>4713</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>58.95</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>16.59</b>

Again, there is no perfect answer and the numbers can always change, but we had to make a decision and do it based on current information. After much discussion and back and forth, the committee voted to make Ball Road the dividing line. There was concern about not disproportionately burdening either district with low membership clubs. The Ball Road dividing line most fairly splits the % of charter strength clubs and the 12 % under clubs between the two districts. Maps showing the different options and club positions are available at: <https://goo.gl/kxBFoA>

**Q: Have you considered splitting the district along county lines (ie., LA/Orange counties)?**

A: Yes. Proposal ".9" (the very first one, a year ago) was to use the 91 freeway, which is roughly the N/S midpoint of the district. That would have put 2/3 of the members in the south and left the north as one of the smallest districts in the world with a high proportion of weak clubs. This was never discussed beyond a small committee.

In LA County, there are ~68 Founder's clubs, ~37 at charter strength, ~13 at 12 & under.

**Q: What happens to the name Founder's District?**

A: Per Toastmasters International policy, the District that has the oldest club will retain the original name. Therefore, because Smedley Club Chapter #1 is south of the dividing line, the southern District would remain Founder's District and the northern district would be District 100. Members who will be in the new district (D100), will ALWAYS be able to claim that they came from Founder's District.

**Q: When would the split actually happen?**

A: The split would be effective with the 2017-2018 Toastmasters year.

**Q: What is the process for the split as it relates to the leaders of the Districts?**

A: If the proposal to move forward with the split is approved at the 7 Nov 2015 Business Meeting, at the following Founder's Spring Conference, one District Director would be elected for the 2016-2017 term. But instead of one set of secondary officers (Program Quality Director and Club Growth Director), the District would elect two sets - one for Founder's and one for the new District. So for the 2016-2017 term, there would be 5 top officers in Founder's. Division Directors would still be elected; Area Directors would still be appointed by the District Director.

The following year (2017-2018) the split would officially take place with each District electing a District Director and other officers.

**Q: How will the New District be funded?**

A: Per Toastmasters International Protocol 7.0 District Structure: At the time of the split, all funds either in Founder's District Bank Accounts or in the World Headquarters Founder's Reserve Account will be distributed amongst the two districts based on the % of member payments made by member clubs in each reformed District in the program year immediately preceding the reformation (split.)

**Q: Do we have leadership to support the new district?**

A: Yes. Given the level of interest and passion for Toastmasters on the expanded District Reformation committee, there are several strong leaders with the vision, commitment and knowledge of what it takes to be successful. Their sense of pride and excitement to take the reins and build something new is evident.

**Q: Will the New District have any support from Founder's District?**

A: When the District splits – support for BOTH of the Districts will come from the Regional Advisor, International Director, and past leaders within the Districts. Because of the close geography, past leaders will also be available to help both Districts. (The new District will have many past leaders including a Past International President as members.)

Additional information is posted on the Founder's District website at: <http://foundersdistrict.org/>