



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0492, Version: 1

Agenda Item Wording:

Update regarding Council District Decennial Redistricting process.

Deadline for Action: N/A

Submitting Department: Administration

Contact Name and Phone Leslie Caviglia, City Manager, 713-4332; Allison Mackey, Community Relations Manager, 713-4535; Michelle Nicholson, Chief Deputy City Clerk, 713-4512.

Department Recommendation: This item is intended to provide an update to the Council regarding the process for drawing updated Council District boundaries to account for the 2020 Census data. As required by State law, the Council previously set a schedule for public hearings, workshops and outreach efforts to elicit public input in the redistricting process.

As directed by the Council, staff initiated the public outreach process by requesting the Measure N committee to hold a public meeting to describe the process and describe public input opportunities. Following that meeting, Staff will continue to meet with all other City Commissions and Committees, providing the same information and opportunity to participate.

In response to questions from the Measure N Committee, staff seeks to confirm with Council that, while no committee or commission has been charged with any particular assignment or request from the Council in regard to the redistricting process, the Measure N Committee, like other City committees, may choose for itself how to engage in the process. Options for participation including holding meetings to receive or provide input on identification of communities of interest that should be considered in the mapping process, or use of the publicly available mapping tools to develop a committee/commission recommended map. In addition, any member and any member of the public is also encouraged to individually participate in the redistricting process and to submit or recommend maps. However, if a Commission/Committee elects to present a map(s) or review and recommend a map, they will need to do that in accordance with the Brown Act. Staff is prepared to assist any of the City's Commissions/Committees that choose to participate in the process as a group in meeting those Brown Act requirements, scheduling a location.

The City Council will be holding the City's second official public hearing for the redistricting process, including a description of the available mapping tools and the map submittal deadlines, as part of the regular Council meeting on Sept. 20.

Background Discussion:

On July 19, 2021, the Council directed staff to ask the Measure N Committee to assist with Redistricting outreach for the Redistricting process. (Copy of staff report attached).

While there is an option to appoint a Redistricting Commission, in the case of a true Commission, a

recruitment would be needed, and an effort to ensure at least geographic, ethnic and gender diversity would have been part of the appointment process consideration. A Commission is not a requirement, but an option.

The census data is approximately 6 months late in being released, and in is still not available in the detail required to provide sufficient precinct data to California communities so that Redistricting maps can be developed. The recruitment and appointment of a Commission can be time consuming. In light of this, it seemed more prudent in the time available to focus on community outreach and broader community participation in the process rather than focusing on a single Commission. The Council used the broad outreach in the original districting process in 2015 and had more than 15 maps submitted. Council provided direction on July 19 to not proceed with a formal commission, but instead directed that the Measure N Committee be asked to participate in the public outreach effort for public participation. That meeting has now been held.

However, some Measure N Committee members requested clarification as to whether the Committee as a whole is being asked to be further involved in the process by developing its own map development, reviewing publicly submitted maps, and making a recommendation to the Council. While staff believes, based on the action taken by Council in July (see attached) that it was not the direction to have a single entity charged with those tasks, it was also Council's desire to have broad based participation. Hence, staff is recommending that it be clarified that while no committee or commission is being specifically charged with reviewing or preparing maps to recommend to council, any of the Council's Commissions and Committees are welcome to participate as they may see fit. If a Commission/Committee elects to present a map, or review and recommend a map, the Commission or Committee will need to do that in accordance with the Brown Act. Staff is prepared to assist the Committees and Commissions in meeting and discussing this item. In doing so, the Committees and Commissions will have the same tools available to them as are being provided to the public at large.

Fiscal Impact:

Nominal. There may be some additional staff work if the Commissions/Committees choose to have additional meetings to be involved in the process.

Prior Council Action: July 19, 2021 - Council authorized the hiring of a consultant and specialized legal counsel, approved a basic process and requested the Measure N Committee to assist with outreach in the redistricting process.

Recommended Motion (and Alternative Motions if expected):

I move to accept the staff report and confirm council direction regarding participation in the redistricting process by the City's Commissions and Committees.

Attachments: None