



CITY OF CARSON

Legislation Text

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Report to Mayor and City Council

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Consent

SUBJECT:

CONSIDER AN UPDATE FROM CITY COUNCIL REDISTRICTING AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE (CITY COUNCIL)

I. SUMMARY

This report provides the City Council an update on the City Council redistricting process, which must be completed by April 17, 2022.

II. RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE.

III. ALTERNATIVES

TAKE another action the City Council deems appropriate.

IV. BACKGROUND

In 2020, the City of Carson adopted City Council districts for the four City Council seats, with the Mayor's seat remaining at large. Every ten years, districts must be redrawn so that each district is substantially equal in population. This process, called redistricting, is important in ensuring that each city councilmember represents about the same number of constituents. In the City of Carson, the Mayor and City Council are responsible for drawing council districts. Redistricting is done using U.S. Census data, which was released in August, 2021. For the City of Carson, the redistricting process must be completed by April 17, 2022.

In July, 2021, the City Council approved an Agreement with Bear Demographics to assist the City with the redistricting process. This report is to provide an update on the efforts of the demographer and a preview of the public meeting schedule between today and the adoption of any revised Council district map.

2020 Census Data

The last official US Census in 2010 recorded the population at 91,714. The U.S. Census estimated Carson's 2018 population at 91,626, a slight decline from 2010. However, the official 2020 Census data puts the population at 95,558 or an increase of about 4,000 residents for more than 4% growth over the past decade, greater than expected.

The final official data, released by the State of California after adjusting the State's prison population, is expected to be received on September 21. The preliminary review of the data shows that the population increase did not result in any of the districts becoming "unbalanced" under the Voting Rights Act. Balanced districts mean, for the purposes of the Council districts, that the largest district is no more than 10% larger than the smallest district by total population. However, the 2020 Census included some changes that affect the City's current Council district boundaries. Namely, some of the block groups in the 2010 Census were combined in 2020, resulting in certain larger block groups that cross current district boundaries. The consultant is working on resolving this technical change through population estimates.

Redistricting Calendar

The proposed schedule for the redistricting process would generally follow the same schedule that was followed in 2019-2020 for the original adoption of the City Council districts. At least two public meetings must be conducted prior to the publication of any draft maps, and the first public hearing to consider such maps must be conducted at least seven days after the publication of the maps. The process must be completed by April 17, 2022.

The first two meetings would be held in the late November-December timeframe, with the maps being published in early- to mid-January. The public hearings for the public to provide input and the City Council to consider the maps would be from early February to mid-March, which provides some extra time to wrap up the process prior to the April deadline if it is needed.

For weeks when a formal public hearing is held, because of the five-day noticing rule, the City Council agenda would have to be posted on the prior Thursday, not Friday (as sometimes happens) for adequate public hearing noticing.

For public workshops that are not a public hearing, the consultant recommends noticing them as special meetings, to allow for compliance with the Brown Act if more than two members of City Council plan to attend.

In addition, there will be a number of community meetings held in the parks, as the City did during the original process. Staff would work with the parent associations and park volunteer associations to increase turnout at these meetings. In addition to using the City's own parks, Staff will research what other locations we could use to host these workshops, such as schools, churches, and other private facilities. The demographer would join several of the larger presentations and Staff will conduct the smaller workshops.

The dates for the workshops will be publicized as early as possible, and Staff will try to finalize the schedule early enough to include it in the Winter Carson Report.

Other Activities

The public workshops and public input hearings will be provided in applicable languages (e.g., Spanish and Tagalog) if residents submit a request in advance. The City will notify the public about redistricting public workshops and public input hearings, post maps online before adoption, and create a dedicated web page for all relevant information about the redistricting process. The website will be set up and linked to the City's website prior to the initial public meetings in November.

V. FISCAL IMPACT

There is no additional fiscal impact to the City based on this update. There may be some additional future cost of the demographer if the City increases the number of meetings he is required to attend, but that will be negotiated. It is possible there could be some additional cost of translation services if it is beyond the scope of employee-provided translation services.

VI. EXHIBITS

None.

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