



Department Source: Law
To: City Council
From: City Manager & Staff
Council Meeting Date: November 1, 2021
Re: Establishing a Ward Reapportionment Committee

Executive Summary

A resolution has been prepared to establish a Ward Reapportionment Committee. The Committee would make its recommendation to the City Council on or before February 15, 2022.

Discussion

Section 4 of the City Charter requires that the City be divided into six (6) wards comprised of compact and contiguous territory. Ward boundaries are required to be reviewed from time to time, as may be necessary to maintain as nearly as possible an equal number of inhabitants in each ward. The courts have mandated a one person one vote standard under the equal protection clause of the Federal Constitution. As a practical matter, the ward boundary review and adjustment process occurs after each federal decennial census because the census contains the data necessary to determine whether or not ward reapportionment is advisable.

The City Charter and state statutes provide that the Council shall establish ward boundaries by ordinance. No special procedures are specified for drawing up municipal ward boundaries and there is no mandated timeline for completion of the work. In 1981, 1991, 2001, and 2011 the City Council appointed citizen advisory committees to recommend new ward boundaries.

A resolution has been prepared that would establish a seven (7) member Ward Reapportionment Committee. Each Council member would submit to the Mayor the name of one individual residing in the member's ward to serve as the ward's representative. The Mayor would appoint these individuals plus one other City resident to serve on the Committee. The resolution provides for the Mayor to appoint a chairperson and vice-chairperson.

At the request of Council, the Committee would need to make its final report to the Council no later than February 15, 2022. The report would consist of recommendations on new ward boundaries with comparative population figures. The Committee is authorized to submit alternate plans.

In drawing proposed boundaries, the Committee must adhere to the following principles:

1. The wards of the City should be as equal in population as the data available permits;



2. The reapportionment of the wards should be brought about in such a manner as to best serve the needs of existing neighborhoods, neighborhood associations, business districts, and other recognizable demographic features wherever possible; and

3. The wards should be compact units drawn in such a manner so as to be readily understood by the voters and to contain contiguous existing neighborhoods, neighborhood associations, business districts and other demographic features with an identifiable community of interest.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: None.

Long-Term Impact: None.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Operational Excellence, Secondary Impact: Social Equity, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
05/02/2011	R66-11A – Established a Ward Reapportionment Committee to make recommendations on new ward boundaries.

Suggested Council Action

Adoption of the resolution.