

# City of South Pasadena Agenda Report

Michael A. Cacciotti, Mayor  
Richard D. Schneider, M.D., Mayor Pro Tem  
Robert S. Joe, Councilmember  
Marina Khubesrian, M.D., Councilmember  
Diana Mahmud, Councilmember

Evelyn G. Zneimer, City Clerk  
Gary E. Pia, City Treasurer

COUNCIL AGENDA: August 16, 2017  
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council  
VIA: Elaine Aguilar, Interim City Manager   
FROM: Anthony J. Mejia, Chief City Clerk   
SUBJECT: **Public Hearing to Receive Input from the Community Regarding  
the Creation of a City Council District-Based Electoral System  
Pursuant to Elections Code Section 10010**

## Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Receive a report from staff concerning the districting process and permissible criteria to be considered to create district boundaries.
2. Conduct a Public Hearing to receive public testimony on the composition of districts for a district-based electoral system pursuant to Elections Code Section 10010.

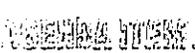
## Commission Review and Recommendation

This matter was not reviewed by a commission.

## Background

On June 19, 2017, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 7524 declaring its intention to transition from at-large to district-based elections for City Council commencing with the General Municipal Election in November 2018. Elections Code Section 10010 provides that before any map or maps of the boundaries for the proposed districts are drawn, the City must conduct two (2) Public Hearings over a period of no more than thirty (30) days, at which time the public is invited to provide input regarding the composition of said districts.

Since adoption of the Resolution of Intent, the City has been engaged in outreach efforts to inform the public about district elections and the process associated with their formation. A webpage ([www.southpasadenaca.gov/districts](http://www.southpasadenaca.gov/districts)) has been developed to provide information about district elections, including opportunities for when and how the public can be engaged. The official notice of Public Hearings has been translated and published in the South Pasadena Review (English), La Opinión (Spanish), World Journal (Chinese), and the Korea Times (Korean) and the public has been offered interpreter services if needed to participate in these Public Hearings.

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### **Analysis**

The purpose of this Public Hearing is to inform the public about the districting process and to hear from the community on what factors should be taken into consideration while creating district boundaries. The City Council may give consideration to the following factors when establishing districts (which are not exclusive):

1. Topography;
2. Geography;
3. Cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity and compactness of territory;
4. Avoid head-to-head contests between incumbents (to the extent possible); and
5. Communities of interest.

The public is requested to provide input regarding communities of interest and other local factors that should be considered while drafting district maps. A *community of interest* is a neighborhood or group that would benefit from being in the same district because of shared interests, views, or characteristics.

Possible community features include, but not limited to:

- A. School attendance areas;
- B. Natural dividing lines such as major roads, hills, or highways;
- C. Areas around parks and other neighborhood landmarks;
- D. Common issues, neighborhood activities, or legislative/election concerns; and
- E. Shared demographic characteristics, such as:
  - (1) Similar levels of income, education, or linguistic insolation;
  - (2) Languages spoken at home; and
  - (3) Single-family and multi-family housing unit areas.

Ultimately, the City Council may choose to include some, all, or none of these criteria; or may choose to come up with unique criteria that the City Council believes is applicable to South Pasadena. However, the City must ensure compliance with the following state and federally-mandated criteria:

- Each district shall contain a nearly equal population.
- Each district shall be drawn in a manner that complies with the Federal Voting Rights Act.
- Each district shall not be drawn with race as the predominate factor in violation of the principles established by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Shaw v. Reno*, 509 U.S. 630 (1993), and its progeny.

### *Next Steps*

At the City Council Meeting of September 6, 2017, the City Council will conduct a 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing to seek public input and to provide direction on criteria to be considered while drafting district maps.

At the City Council Meeting of September 20, 2017, the City Council will conduct a 3<sup>rd</sup> Public Hearing to seek public input on the content of the draft district map(s) and sequence of elections. The City Council will be requested to select a preferred map and direct amendments as necessary.

At the City Council Meeting of October 4, 2017, the City Council will conduct a 4<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing to adopt a preferred district map and to introduce an ordinance to transition to a district-based electoral system.

**Fiscal Impact**

There will be significant staff time needed to transition to a district-based electoral system due to the need to conduct multiple Public Hearings, in addition to the cost for a demographic consultant. Should the City ultimately adopt an ordinance to transition to a district-based electoral system, the City will be required to reimburse the plaintiff for its attorney's fees and costs up to \$30,000, but will not be exposed to additional legal fees in defense of a lawsuit brought under the California Voting Rights Act.

**Legal Review**

The City Attorney has reviewed this item.

**Public Notification of Agenda Item**

The public was made aware that this item was to be considered this evening by virtue of its inclusion on the legally publicly noticed agenda, posting of the same agenda and reports on the City's website and/or notice in the *South Pasadena Review* and/or the *Pasadena Star-News*. In addition, the City conducted additional outreach efforts as outlined in the Background section.

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