

OCM 12-02 Consider Moving From Odd-Year Elections to Even-Year Elections

Lead Department Office of the City Manager

History 1 year ago None 2 years ago None

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

This study would consider the pros and cons of moving the City of Sunnyvale's general elections from odd-numbered years (as currently required by the Charter) to even-numbered years. Fiscal impacts to the City would be analyzed, as would potential impacts to voter turn-out.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

City Charter Section 1400. General Municipal Elections.

There shall be a General Municipal Election to fill elective offices in the odd-numbered years on the date established under General Law for the election of governing board members of elementary school districts. (Amended effective December 31, 1975)

Council Policy B.5 Conduct elections in accordance with the Charter and state laws.

B.5a Consolidate elections whenever possible.

B.5b Provide voters with information about election procedures and candidates.

B.5c Provide Council candidates with information to inform them of current City issues.

B.5d Explore ways to increase voter turnout in local elections, such as mail ballots.

3. Origin of issue

Council Member(s) Councilmember Meyering, Councilmember Whittum

4. Staff effort required to conduct study Minor

Briefly explain the level of staff effort required

The City Clerk will coordinate research to provide information and analysis regarding costs, impacts and possible benefits to be gained in switching from odd-year to even-year elections. A review of this was recently conducted by staff in 2010 (Study Issue OCA 10-01 and RTC 10-274, 10/19/2010), therefore updating the results of that study should be a relatively minor endeavor.

5. Multiple Year Project? No **Planned Completion Year** 2012

6. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

Does Council need to approve a work plan? No

Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? No

If so, which?

Is a Council Study Session anticipated? No

7. Briefly explain if a budget modification will be required to study this issue

Amount of budget modification required 0

Explanation

8. Briefly explain potential costs of implementing study results, note estimated capital and operating costs, as well as estimated revenue/savings, include dollar amounts

Are there costs of implementation? Yes

Explanation

To implement a change from odd-year elections to even-year elections, a charter amendment would be required. A charter amendment added to the next regular municipal election in the City of Sunnyvale (November 5, 2013) would add an estimated \$40,000 to the cost of the election, charged at the lower "additional issue" rate. A charter amendment held during an off-election year for the City would cost significantly more as the City would pay for this measure at the higher "initial issue" rate, rather than at the "additional issue" rate. Should the charter amendment be approved, the County Registrar of Voters would incur a one-time cost of approximately \$20,000 to process the change in the election information management system, and this cost would be charged to the City. Aside from the cost of the ballot measure and the initial cost of implementation, conducting the City's General Municipal Elections in even-years may result in ongoing savings of \$26,000 to \$100,000.

9. **Staff Recommendation**

Staff Recommendation None

If 'Support', 'Drop' or 'Defer', explain

This study issue was considered in 2010 as OCA 10-01 and OCM 10-02 and came before Council October 19, 2010 as RTC 12-274. A motion to direct staff to prepare a charter amendment to switch from odd-year to even-year elections failed on a 2 - 5 vote.

Reviewed by



Department Director

1-13-12

Date

Approved by



City Manager

1-16-12

Date