



# City Council Special Meeting

**Ballot Measures  
regarding District Elections**

**July 16, 2018**



# Background

- On June 6, 2018, the Santa Clara Superior Court issued a ruling stating that the City's current at-large, by-seat election system violated the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA).
- Court directed the City to make best efforts to hold public hearings on possible district plans for Council elections
- Remedies phase to begin this Wednesday, July 18
- Judgment could be as soon as July 23



# Court Ordered Public Hearings

- **Purpose: Solicit feedback from the public regarding district elections**
- **The Ad-hoc Advisory Districting Committee held a total of three public hearings: July 3, July 5 and July 11**
- **The fourth public hearing will be held tonight as part of the Special Council Meeting**



# Public Process

- Previous public process that lead to Measure A was 4-month long process (which was already accelerated)
- Court-ordered process was 2 weeks
- Based on feedback received, voter confusion is apparent



# November 2018 Election

- **Court likely to rule on how candidates are to be elected in November 2018 election**
- **As a Charter City, the City Council may place one or more measures on the ballot to ask the voters how Council Members should be elected in November 2020 and beyond**



# November 2020 Election

- **Deadline for Ballot Measures to ROV is August 10**
- **Council Recess July 18-August 20**
- **Upon receipt of 2020 census data, re-districting will be needed**



# Two Policy Options

- **Advisory Ballot Measure (non-binding)**
  - Maximizes community input and sequentially provides voters with the right to determine whether there are Council districts and if so, how many. Minimizes voter confusion.
- **2, 3 or 6 District Ballot Measures**
  - Accelerates community input and voter decision on the number of Council districts and assumes Santa Clara voters want to elect Council Members by districts. May result in increased voter confusion.



# Alternative 1 – Advisory Ballot Measure

*Shall the City of Santa Clara engage the voters in a public process to draft a Charter Amendment ballot measure to elect its Council Members, other than the Mayor, by district?*





# Advisory Ballot Measure - Considerations

- **Non-binding**
- **Would allow for a robust, sequential public outreach and engagement process to avoid voter confusion. Information and education efforts would be on each step of the process.**
- **Seek public input on: number of districts, boundary lines, sequencing and transition plan**
- **Charter Amendment ballot measure would be voted on in June 2020 in time for November 2020 election if passed.**



## Alternative 2 –

### District Ballot Measures

- In order to effect a change to the Charter, a ballot measure must receive 50%+1 of the votes
- In the event Council places more than one measure on the ballot, the measure that has achieved the highest vote will prevail
- In each option, Charter Amendments would modify Charter Sections 600, 700.1 and add a new Section 700.2



## Two Council Districts

*Shall the City Charter be amended to change how Council Members are elected by establishing **two** districts beginning in 2020 each represented by **three** Council Members with sequencing and terms to be established by ordinance of the City Council?*



# Three Council Districts

*Shall the City Charter be amended to change how Council Members are elected by establishing **three** districts beginning in 2020 each represented by **two** Council Members with sequencing and terms to be established by ordinance of the City Council?*



# Six Council Districts

*Shall the City Charter be amended to change how Council Members are elected by establishing **six** districts beginning in 2020 each represented by **one** Council Member with sequencing and terms to be established by ordinance of the City Council?*



# Ballot Arguments

- Council may designate up to three Council Members to draft an argument for any ballot measure
- Otherwise, any registered voter or bona fide association of citizens may submit an argument
- Arguments due to City Clerk: **August 14, noon**
- Rebuttal arguments and City Attorney Impartial Analysis due to City Clerk : **August 21, noon**



# Outreach and Education

- **City website and e-Notify**
- **Social Media**
- **Government Access Channel**
- **Publication of ads in local and ethnic media outlets**
- **Direct Mail and flyers**
- **Translation in multiple languages**



# Fiscal Impact

- Each ballot measure would be approximately \$90,800
- A total of 2 ballot measures have been budgeted, including printing, translation services and publication of notices
- Note: depending upon Council direction, additional funds may be needed for professional consulting services for voter education





# Action Alternatives

- Adopt the requisite Resolutions to submit one or more ballot measures for the November 2018 election:
  - Advisory Vote; **OR**
  - 2 Districts; **OR/AND**
  - 3 Districts; **OR/AND**
  - 6 Districts; **OR/AND**



## Action Alternatives (cont)

- Designate up to three Council Members to author ballot argument and direct City Attorney to draft Impartial Analysis
- OR
- Maintain the status-quo and await the Court's ruling on the CVRA case



# City of Santa Clara

The Center of What's Possible

