

Charter Review Commission



**Council Districts & Redistricting Subcommittee
Proposed Recommendations**

April 25, 2024

Agenda

- Charge
- Resource Investment
- Feedback
- Research and Conclusions
- Proposed Recommendation
- Next Steps

Council Districts and Redistricting

Charge

Council Districts - Whether an increase in single-member Council districts would appropriately enhance representation for San Antonio residents

Redistricting - Whether the decennial Council redistricting process should be conducted by an independent, autonomous citizens committee and how such a committee's membership shall be appointed

Chair:

- Frank Garza

Members:

- Naomi Miller
- Bobby Perez
- Dr. Rogelio Saenz
- Maria Salazar

Resource Investment



- The subcommittee met again since presenting their preliminary recommendation on March 21, 2024 to:
 - Review and consider public feedback from SASpeakUp and CRC meetings
 - Evaluate potential revisions to the subcommittee’s recommendations in light of public and CRC feedback, expertise and findings of those on the subcommittee, and past experiences and feedback received during 2021 redistricting process including extensive public comment during that time period

Feedback



- Public feedback from SASpeakUp and CRC meetings, general CRC and feedback heard during 2021 redistricting process included:
 - Indexing the number of council districts to population growth
 - Expanding who cannot serve on the redistricting commission to include family members of council member's employees
 - Include requirement that communication with lobbyists and consultants intended to influence the commission be done in an open meeting of the full City Council or redistricting commission

Research and Conclusion

The subcommittee's recommendation remains substantially as stated in their March 21 preliminary presentation with the following revisions.

- An increase in Single Member Districts (SMDs) is not needed at this time given the projected population growth and ability of current council offices to serve their constituents (e.g., budget per district, use of City resources and communication tools to widen awareness across a larger population, etc.).
 - Add Charter language so that Council appoint the redistricting commission to reexamine council boundaries if voters decide to increase the number of council districts even if that time does not coincide with a Federal decennial census.
- A hybrid redistricting commission, versus an independent commission, would best serve San Antonio's redistricting process.
 - Expand who cannot serve on the commission to include immediate family members of council members' employers.

Proposed Recommendation



Charter, Section 4A creating a hybrid redistricting commission

- **When redistricting occurs:**
 - Charter currently states redistricting occurs after each Federal decennial census
 - Recommend amending the Charter to allow for redistricting if voters through a future Charter election, amend and increase the number of districts

2020 – Population per district is approximately **143,462**

2030 – Population per district is estimated between **155,551 – 160,661**

Proposed Recommendation



Charter, Section 4A creating a hybrid redistricting commission

- **Commission composition:**
 - 11 total commission members – 1 appointed by the mayor and 10 appointed by the councilmember representing the SMD
 - 10 SMD appointees must be registered to vote in their respective SMD
 - Members cannot be:
 - An elected official to any local, state or federal office or their immediate family member
 - Employee or the immediate family member of an employee of the City of San Antonio, a Local Government Corporation governed by the City Council, or employed/supervised by a Councilmember

Proposed Recommendation



- **Communication**

- If intended to lobby or influence the commission member with respect to redistricting, then the councilmember's communication with the commission member must be by testimony in an open meeting of the full City Council or commission or by memo to the full commission or council.

Proposed Recommendation



- **Adopting a redistricting plan**
 - City Council responsible for adopting a redistricting plan
 - Commission creates and presents a recommended plan that can be adopted by a majority vote of Council
 - Council can propose amending the recommended plan in an open meeting with a written explanation for the amendment
 - The proposed amendment would go back to the commission for consideration.
 - If the amendment is adopted by the commission, then the amended plan can be adopted by Council with a majority vote.

Proposed Recommendation



- **Adopting a redistricting plan (cont)**
 - If the Council's amendment of the original recommended plan is rejected by the commission, then either:
 - The original recommended plan can be adopted by a majority vote of City Council, or
 - The Council's amended plan can be approved by three-fourths (9 votes) of the members of the City Council.
 - If final action is not taken by the City Council within 45 days after the recommended plan was presented to the City Council for adoption, then the City Council must adopt the recommended redistricting plan and, the recommended plan of the redistricting commission will become the final districting plan for the city.

Q & A

Next Steps



- Commission feedback
- Further discussion on feedback and questions from today to finalize recommendation and draft proposed Charter amendments



Thank You
End of Presentation