



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – March 24, 2021 Agenda Item 6

Work Session

Preparation for Redistricting

Recommended Council Action

Consider redistricting criteria and authorize next steps in preparation for redistricting in advance of the 2022 election.

Context with Key Issues

Guidance for redistricting of Takoma Park's wards is provided in the *City Charter*:

City Charter, Section 301(c): The City of Takoma Park shall be divided into six (6) wards for municipal voting purposes. Each ward shall be compact in form, composed of adjoining territory, and have substantially equal population. The ward boundaries shall be established by ordinance and shall be reviewed after each decennial census. The boundary descriptions of the six (6) wards shall be kept on file for public view at all times in the office of the City Clerk.

City Charter, Section 401(b) General Powers of the Council: Ward Redistricting. To provide for the redistricting of the wards of the City; provided, however, that the number of wards shall be as set forth in this charter, wards shall be as nearly equal in population as is practical and apportioned consistently with the principle of one person/one vote, wards shall be geographically contiguous, ward boundaries shall to the extent practical recognize natural boundaries, and no ward shall be gerrymandered to ensure the election or defeat of any incumbent candidate or potential candidate.

In addition to guidance from the City Charter, the Council may want to include other considerations, such as minimizing division of neighborhoods or apartment complexes.

Census data is expected to be released by September 30, 2021, but preliminary work on city redistricting can begin much sooner.

Suggested schedule:

April 2021: Issue RFP for Redistricting Services

May 2021: Select vendor

July 2021 – August 2021: Provide Takoma Park data to vendor, develop schedule for redistricting, plan for public outreach

September 2021: Vendor attends City Council meeting in early September; hold first public meeting for residents to set the stage for the redistricting process.

October 2021 – December 2021: Development of map alternatives, public meetings, updates to City Council

January 2021 – Present final options to City Council

February 2021 – Council adopts new ward boundaries

Council Priority

Engaged, Responsive, and Service-Oriented Government

Environmental Considerations

N/A

Fiscal Considerations

To be determined. Initial estimates range from \$15,000 to \$30,000.

Racial Equity Considerations

The 2020 Census will report population by race by Census block, which can be taken into consideration when reviewing redistricting options. Note that if Ward lines divide blocks (in order to have properties across the street from each other be in the same Ward, for example), population by race will need to be estimated for those blocks.

Attachments and Links