

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: August 24, 2023

PREPARED BY: Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk

REQUEST: PALM DESERT REDISTRICTING 2023 - REVIEW OF THE SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS/WORKSHOPS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PLAN – OPTIONAL PROCESSES FOR ESTABLISHING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve the Public Education and Outreach Plan & Schedule of Public Hearings/Workshops.
2. Provide direction relative to optional processes for establishing district boundaries.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

On June 22, 2023, the City Council voted 5-0 to direct staff to take the necessary steps to transition to five (5) single-member districts prior to the November 2024 Election and to eliminate use of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) in future elections.

Since that time, the City Attorney and Attorney Kevin Shenkman have reached a mutual understanding that the existing settlement agreement/stipulated judgement allows the City to adopt a five-district system as an alternative to RCV, without further action by the Court. As such, once the City Council concludes the redistricting process and adopts a final map it is anticipated that an ordinance rescinding use of RCV will be presented for City Council consideration.

Furthermore, to ensure staff is ready to proceed with the redistricting process upon City Council's adoption of the Public Education and Outreach Plan, the City Manager, under his authority, executed agreements with National Demographic Corporation (NDC) for demographer services and Tripepi Smith for outreach and engagement services (currently being routed for signatures). The City Council previously expressed support for the selection of NDC to serve as the City's demographer. Tripepi Smith has extensive experience working with local governments related to election matters and districting/redistricting. Tripepi Smith assisted the City in the 2018 district formation process and the 2022 RCV public education effort with positive feedback from staff.

Assembly Bill 764 is circulating through the legislature and appears to have broad support and likely to pass into law. AB 764 expands the FAIR Maps Act by increasing the public hearing and public outreach requirements. If adopted, AB 764 would take effect January 2024 and any districting/redistricting processes in progress would need to comply with its requirements. As such, staff and legal counsel have studied AB 764 and tailored the schedule of public hearings and Public Education and Outreach Plan to comply with the provisions of AB 764, as it stands today. See Attachment 1 for the schedule of public hearings/workshops and Public Education and Outreach Plan.

Optional Processes for Establishing District Boundaries (E.C. §23000 et seq.)

There are several optional methods available for updating district boundaries, including establishing a Council-Driven Process, Advisory Redistricting Commission, Independent Redistricting Commission, or Hybrid Redistricting Commission. Additional details are provided in Attachment 2.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Below is a summary of the contracts associated with redistricting. There is sufficient funding in the Elections Budget for these costs.

Provider	SERVICE	Amount
National Demographics Corp.	Demographer Services	\$60,000
Tripepi Smith	Outreach & Engagement Services	\$60,000 (\$40,000 for direct services & \$20,000 advertising)
Professional Interpreting	On-Call Spanish Translation and Interpreter Services	\$5,000
CASL Interpreting	On-Call American Sign Language Interpreter Services	\$5,000
Printing & Mailing Company	Citywide Mailer	\$25,000 (estimate)
TOTAL		\$155,000

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Public Education and Outreach Plan & Schedule of Public Hearings/Workshops
2. Optional Processes for Establishing District Boundaries
3. Contract – National Demographics Corporation
4. Contract – Tripepi Smith (draft)