

July 20, 2020



# Election 2021

## Charter Amendment & Code Revisions

CITY OF HYATTSVILLE, MARYLAND



# Agenda



Elections Overview

Election 2021 Proposal

Draft Legislation

Timeline & Costs

Next Steps

Council Discussion

# Hyattsville Elections

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## Overview

- Held Bi-annually
- Non-partisan
- Officials serve 4 year staggered terms



**NEXT SCHEDULED ELECTION  
MAY 2021**

## Election Administration

### Board of Supervisors of Elections

- 5 Members
- Appointed to 4 year terms
- Administration & Regulation of Elections

### Ethics Commission

- 5 Members
- Appointed to 3 year terms
- Campaign Finance Certification

### City Clerk's Office

- Facilitate Election Administration
- Support to Board & Commission
- Liaison to State, County, Vendor
- Maintain City-only Voter Registry



# Voting Should Be...



EASY & CONVENIENT



SAFE, SECURE, &  
ACCESSIBLE



FUN!



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# Hyattsville Voting Initiatives

**16 & 17 YEAR OLD  
VOTING**

2015

**EARLY  
VOTING**

2015

**EXPANDED VOTER  
OUTREACH**

2015

**CANDIDATE  
OUTREACH &  
TRAINING**

2016

**NON-US CITIZEN  
VOTING**

2017

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE  
REFORMS**

2017 & 2019

**SAME DAY  
VOTER  
REGISTRATION**

2019

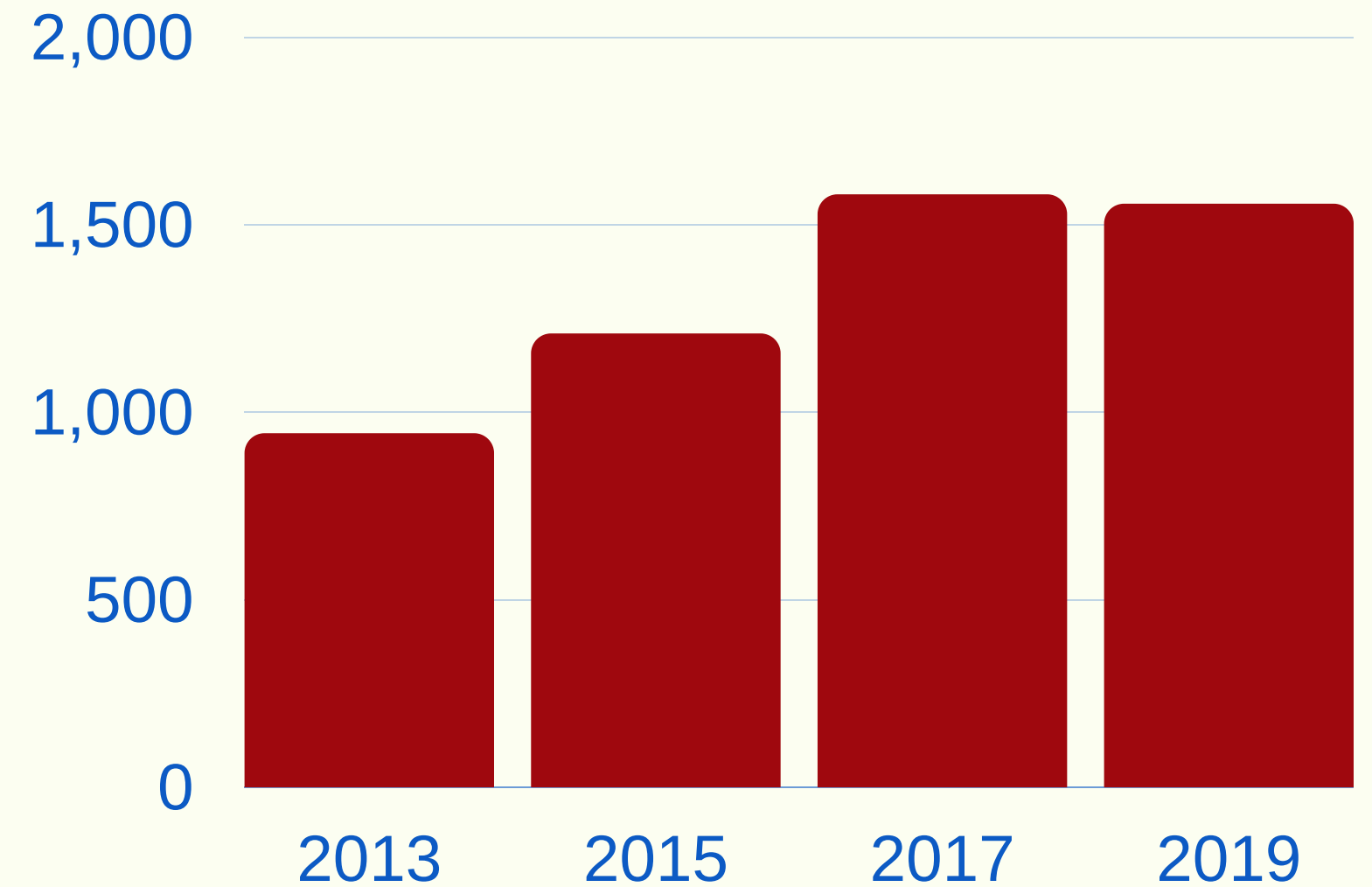
**POP UP  
POLLING**

2019

# Voter Turnout

**2013 – 2019**

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF  
REGISTERED VOTERS:  
10,300**



While turnout has increased, it hovers around 15% – well below the National Average, but typical for similarly sized municipalities.



# Election 2021 Proposal

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- All Vote-by-Mail Election
- Council Organization Adjustments
- Changes to Election Timeline
- Communications & Outreach
- Safe, Secure, & Accessible Elections

# All Vote-by-Mail Election

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## How does it work?

- Ballots Mailed to All Registered Voters (No Application Necessary)
- Postage Paid Return Envelope
- At Least One Drop Box Location
- Election Day Polling Location
- Partnership with Post Office & County
- Infrastructure Investments (Ballot Boxes & Security Measures)

## Advantages

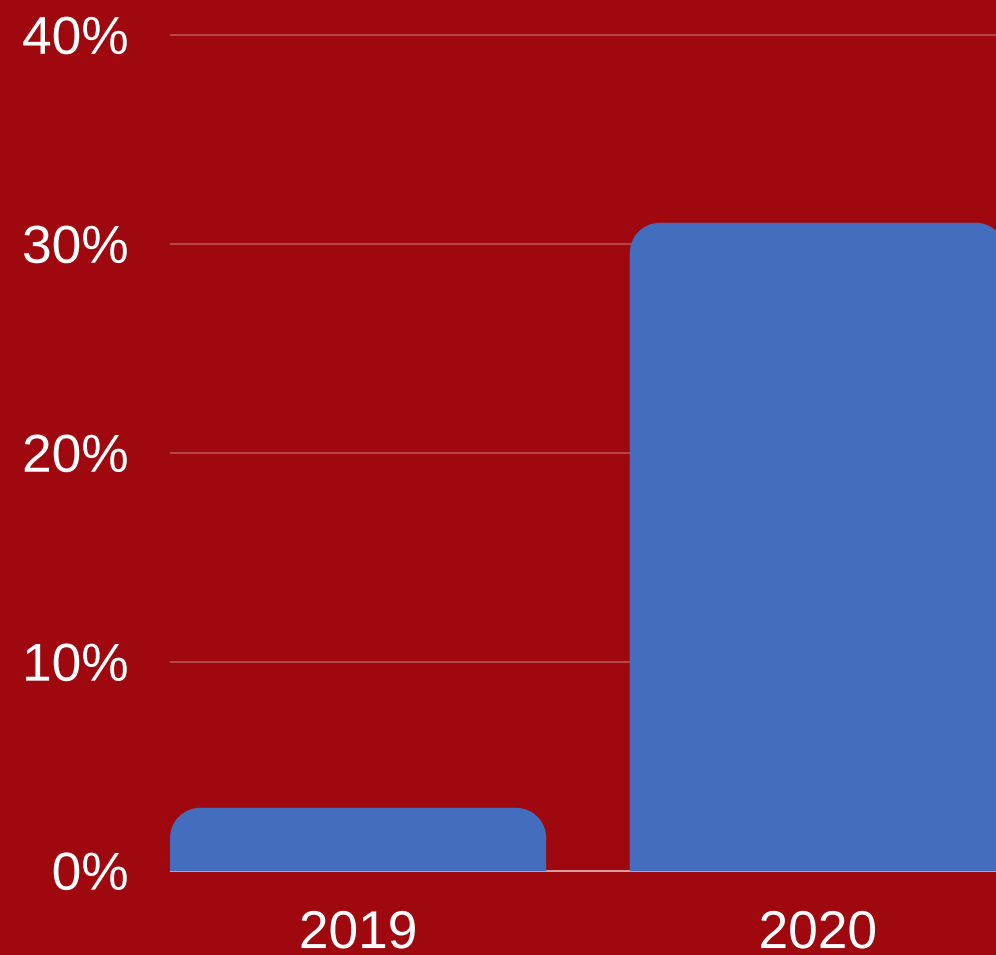
- Voter Convenience & Satisfaction
- Increased Voter Turnout
- More Accurate Voter Rolls
- Decreased Costs for Pollworkers

## Disadvantages

- Increased Costs for Infrastructure & Communications
- Loss of "Traditional" Election
- Possible Increase in Campaign Expenditures for Candidates

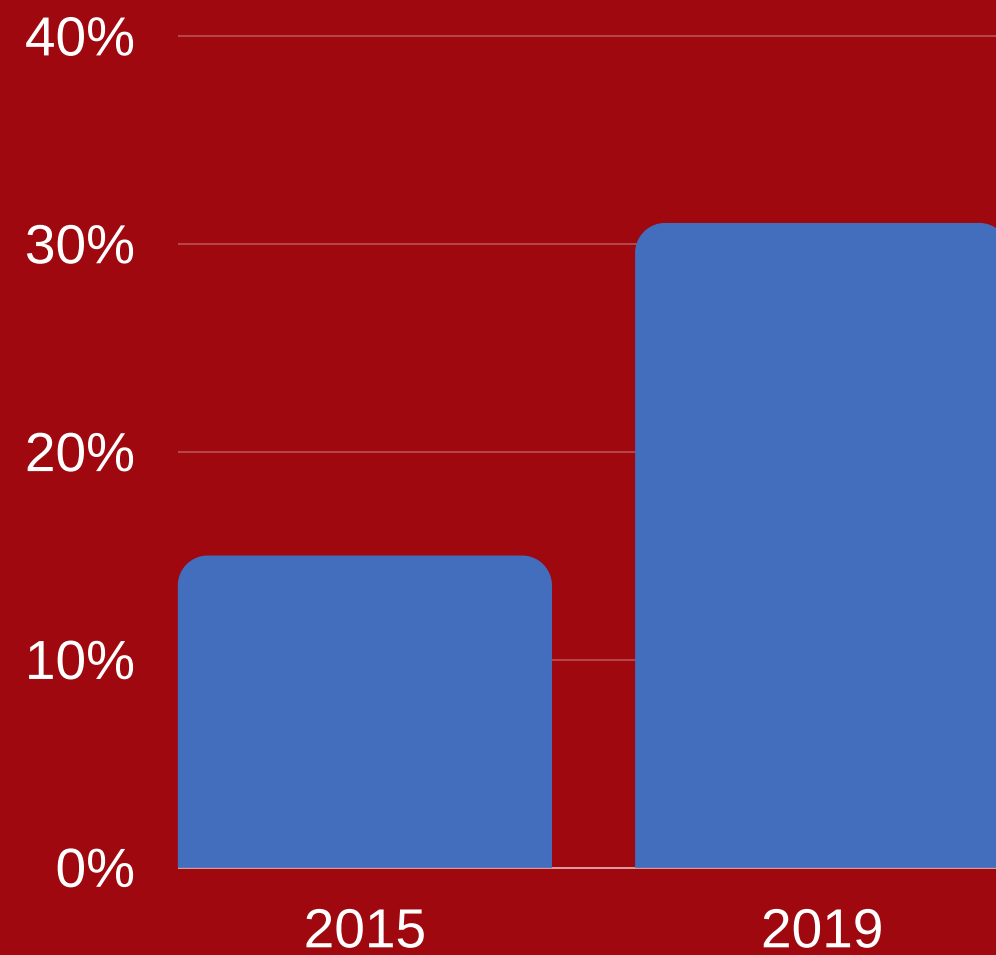


# Vote-by-Mail Results



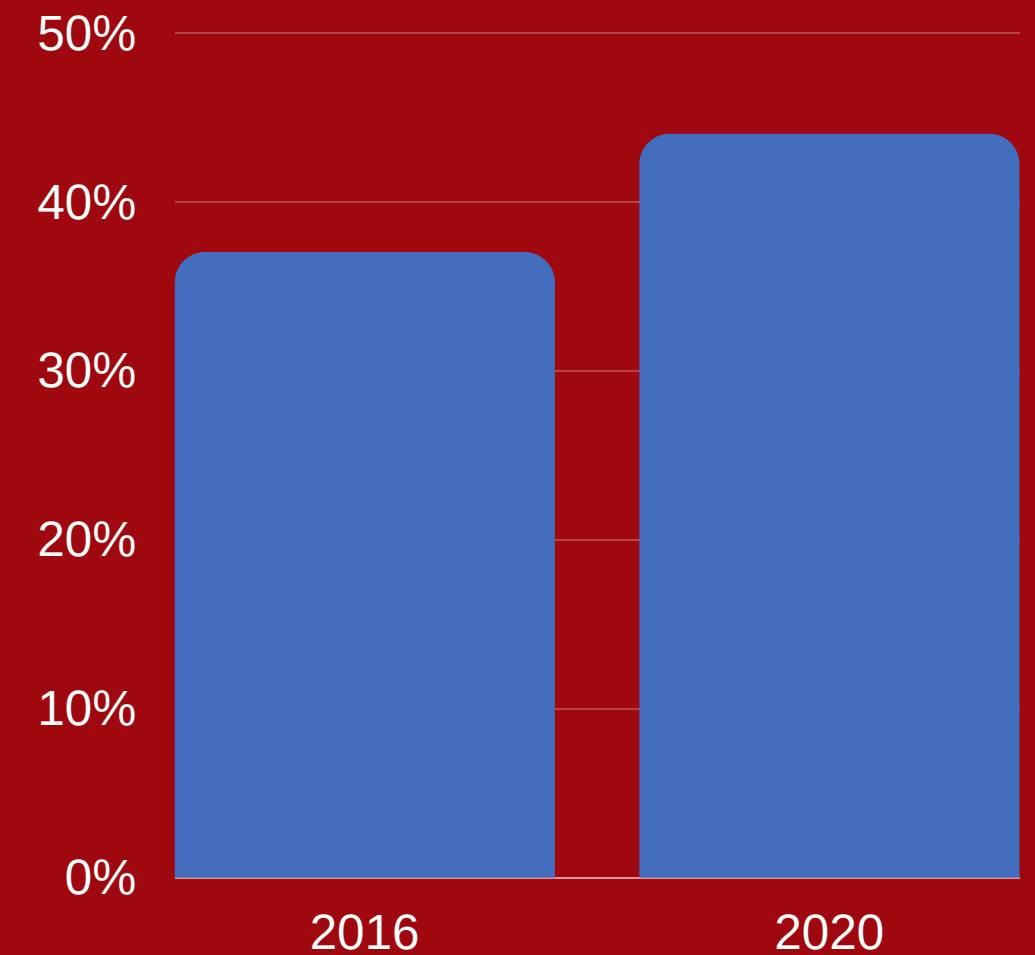
NEW CARROLLTON

2020 – 33% Voter Turnout



ROCKVILLE

2019 – 31% Voter Turnout



STATE OF MARYLAND

Presidential Primary  
2020 – 44% Voter Turnout

# Vote-by-Mail ...The HVL Way



## Enabling Legislation

- Method of Voting Determined by Council via Resolution (Fall Prior to Election)
- Board of Supervisors of Elections Makes Recommendation on Method
- Allows Future Council's Flexibility

## Extended Election "Season"

- Proposed Election Day Change
- Opens Two Weeks Early & Closes One Week Later – Allows Additional Time for Outreach, Communications & Mailings

## Early Voting

- Drive Through Drop Offs, At Least One Ballot Box



# **Vote-by-Mail...The HVL Way**

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## **Ballots Mailed between 45-30 Days Prior to Election**

- Allows Adequate Time for Ballots to be Sent/Received

## **Replacement ballots Issued if Original was Lost or Damaged**

- Affidavit Required

## **Centralized Election Day Polling Location**

- Offers an In-Person "Traditional" Voting Experience to Drop off Ballot
- Provides ADA Compliance for Voters Requiring Assistance
- Same Day Registration for New Voters on Election Day

## **Required Minimum of Four Communications to Residents**

- Postcard Mailings, Creative Advertisement & Outreach, Election Guide

## **Ballots Required to be Returned by 8 PM Election Day – No Postmarks**

# Council Organization Adjustments

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## Charter Amendment Required

- Seeks to Address Concerns with Existing Council Organization Procedures for the Election of Council President & Vice President
- Allows Time for Council to Review & Discuss Roles

## Council Meeting – 3rd Monday in May

- Certification of Election Results
- Adjourn Sine Die of Current Council – Eliminates Last Meeting of Current Council and Oath of Office on the Same Night

## June Council Meeting

Oath of Office, 1st Meeting of New Council

## July Council Meeting

Council Elects President & Vice President



# Summary of Timeline Changes 2021

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**November:** Council Adopts Resolution for Method of Voting

**February:** Candidate Registration Opens for 6.5 Weeks

**March:**

- Candidate Registration Closes
- Voter Registration Deadline to Receive Ballot Automatically by Mail

**April:** Ballots Mailed to all Registered Voters

**Tuesday, May 11:** Election Day

- Ballots due by 8 PM, Polling Center Open with Same Day Registration
- Certification of Results due within 5 days

**Monday, May 17:** Acceptance of Certified Election Results, Adjourn Sine Die

**Monday, June 7:** Oath of Office, 1st Meeting of New Council

**Monday, July 19:** Election of Council President & Vice President

# Cost Considerations

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## New Costs:

### Postage

- Prepaid bulk mail

### Infrastructure & Security Costs

- Ballot Box: Approximately \$8K  
(includes box and installation)

### Increased Communications

### Purchase of PPE for Election Workers

## Reduced Costs:

### Pollworkers

**Current FY21 Budget: \$55,000**

### VBM Budget Comparables

- Rockville – Approximately \$350K over 2 years
- New Carrollton – Approximately \$40K

### Request for Quotes:

### Due September 1

- Recommendation to Council in October

# Safe & Secure Elections

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## Infrastructure Investments

- Secure, Semi Permanent Install in ADA Accessible Locations with CCTV Camera Surveillance
- Secure Ballot Storage and Processing Location – Security Cage

## Policies & Procedures

- Secure Ballot Design – Ensuring Voter Privacy
- Chain of Custody for Ballot Transfers
- Ballot Canvas Procedures
- Ballot Return Transparency (voter lookup)
- Mechanism for Reissuing Ballots



# Outreach

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## Voters

- At least four informational mailings
- Voter Registration Drives
- BOSE Presence at City Events
- Election Guide
- Candidate Forum
- Pop Up Ballot Drop Offs
- Community Outreach
  - HOA's
  - Multifamily Developments
  - Schools

## Candidates

- Candidate Information Sessions
- Candidate Fact Sheet
- Campaign Finance Training

## Outreach Mediums

- Postcard Mailings
- Hyattsville Reporter & Life & Times
- Virtual/In-Person Community Forums
- Subscriber Emails/Texts
- Social Media Presence
- Electronic Messaging Boards
- Advertisement in Big Belly, Bus Shelters, Metro, Vehicle Wraps



# Voter Engagement

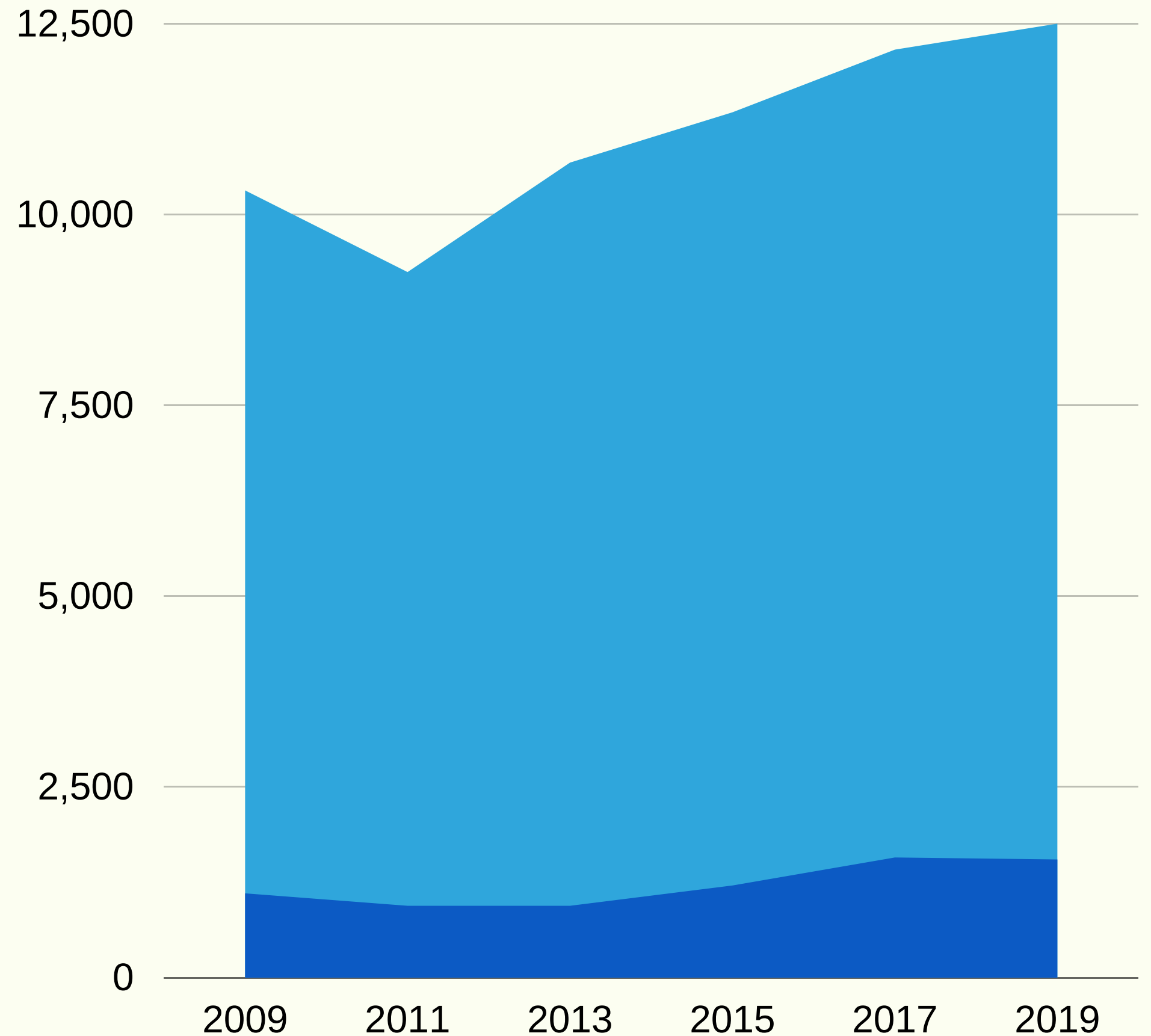




# Voter Turnout

2009 - 2019

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10,300



# Next Steps



Council Discussion – July 20

RFP Issued – July 20

RFP Due – Sept 1

Council Discussion – Sept 21

1st Reading – Oct 5

Adoption – Oct 19

Resolution for VBM Election –  
Nov 2