



Legislation Text

File #: HCC-178-FY23, **Version:** 1

Submitted by: Laura Reams
Submitting Department: City Clerk
Agenda Section: Action

Item Title:

Charter Amendment Resolution 2022-02: Adjusting the City's Five Ward Boundaries

Suggested Action:

I move the Mayor and Council introduce and adopt Hyattsville Charter Amendment Resolution 2022-02, a resolution amending the Charter to adjust the City's five ward boundaries based on the most recent census data and the relevant legal requirements (INTRODUCTION & ADOPTION).

Summary Background:

Every ten years, after the Census, the City must use the new census data to review its ward boundaries, and if needed, redraw the boundaries between wards in order to reflect how the local populations have changed. The authority for the modification of ward boundaries is found in the City Charter, § C4-17.

The redistricting process is done with the primary goal of creating wards which have substantially equal populations. The widely accepted standard for population variation between the largest ward and the smallest ward is that there should not be a greater than 10% difference. Additional criteria for consideration throughout the redistricting process is listed below.

- Wards must be comprised of contiguous territory and as geographically compact as possible.
- Wards shall, as much as possible, be bounded by natural boundaries, street lines, and/or City boundary lines.
- Wards must be drawn to provide fair and effective representation for all residents of the City, including racial, ethnic, and language minorities. Additionally, to the extent possible, wards should preserve identifiable communities of interest. The redrawing of the City's ward boundaries should be designed to ensure that our elected body is representative of the City's diverse population.
- Wards most likely to be impacted by future development may be smaller by design in order to minimize impact of population growth on future redistricting.

The Redistricting Commission was appointed in June 2022 to make recommendations to Council on revisions to the existing Ward boundaries based on 2020 Census data. A preliminary review of that data demonstrated that Wards 3 and 5 were outside of the recommended 10% variance in population and a redistricting effort was warranted.

In addition to the population counts, the Committee conducted a review of existing conditions, future developments, and available demographic data from the 2020 Census. They sought feedback from community members both in-person at City events and online using the City's new community engagement tool, Hello Hyattsville. The City's Race and Equity Officer joined the meetings to assist with questions of ensuring equity for all community members.

The Committee presented two maps for consideration to the Council at the October 17 Public Hearing, the Minimal Adjustment Map and the Growth Conscious Map. After reviewing public and Council feedback, the Commission made changes to the Growth Conscious Map which are detailed in the background memo. The final versions of the Minimal

Adjustment Map and the Growth Conscious Map were presented to Council on November 7. Both maps were voted down by the City Council and the Redistricting Committee was provided direction to develop maps in response to Council requests. The Commission met on November 14 and made an update to the Growth Conscious Map (version 4). The Commission declined to move forward with the Minimal Adjustments Map due to both a lack of Council support for the map and determination that it did not meet the requirement for no greater than 10% variance in population between wards.

The updated Growth Conscious Map and two Council Requests map were presented to Council on November 21 for review and discussion. At the November 21, 2022, Council meeting, Council voted to proceed with Council Request Map B and authorized the City Attorney to draft the Charter Amendment Resolution and for staff to schedule the required public hearing for 6 pm on December 19, 2022.

Next Steps:

Changing the ward boundaries requires a Charter Amendment. A Public Hearing on the proposed Charter Amendment Resolution will be held at 6 pm on December 19, 2022. The final adoption of the Resolution is scheduled to take place during the Council Meeting of December 19, 2022. The Charter Amendment will be effective on February 7, 2023 (50 days after passage). Legal notice will be posted in the Prince George's Post.

Upon adoption of the new ward boundaries, City staff will conduct a public outreach campaign on the new boundaries prior to the Spring 2023 City Election.

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

City Administrator Comments:

Recommend Support.

Community Engagement:

Communications staff serve as staff liaison to this Committee and have been closely following the process. To date, communications about the process have been shared via email/text message, social media, in print in the Hyattsville Reporter and Hyattsville Life and Times, on the City's LED message boards, and via flyers placed in resident trash cans, in apartment buildings, churches, schools, and other public locations. All communications currently direct people to the Redistricting Project Page on the Hello Hyattsville platform for further information and to provide comment.

Members of the Redistricting Committee also attended the August Summer Jam and Back to School events to gather feedback in-person.

Strategic Goals:

Goal 1 - Ensure Transparent and Accessible Governance

Legal Review Required?

Complete